UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

105 794

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

THE MENTALLY DISTURBED TEACHER

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY

THE MENTALLY DISTURBED TEACHER

CHILTON COMPANY · BOOK DIVISION

Publishers

PHILADELPHIA AND NEW YORK

Copyright © 1961 by Joseph T. Shipley
First Edition
All Rights Reserved
Published in Philadelphia by Chilton Company,
and simultaneously in Toronto, Canada,
by Ambassador Books, Ltd.
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 61-13303

Designed by William E. Lickfield
Manufactured in the United States of America by
Quinn & Boden Company, Inc., Rahway, N. J.

To SHIRLEY

Contents

	Introduction	1
1.	Inability to Control the Class	55
2.	Corporal Punishment	67
3.	Irritability	84
4.	Nagging and Abuse	90
5.	Excessive Strictness	99
6.	Withdrawal or Hostility	106
7.	Sense of Persecution	125
8.	Delusions and Hallucinations	143
9.	Delusions of Grandeur	156
10.	Euphoria	167
11.	Hypochondriasis	173
12.	Depression and Manic Depression	178
13.	Anxiety	188
14.	Gross Physical Disorderliness	204
15.	Disorderly Thinking and Bemusement	219
16.	Senile Deterioration	236
17.	Epilepsy	263
18.	Alcoholism	268
19.	Dishonesty and Kleptomania	274
20.	Sexual Deviation and Excess	300
21.	Lack of Interest and Hatred of the Work	334
22.	From the Teacher's Side	345
23.	A Teacher Complains	361
	Conclusion	370
	Index	399

THE MENTALLY DISTURBED TEACHER

Introduction

OUR CLASSES CONTAIN 2 million more children than they properly have room for, taught by 90 thousand teachers not properly equipped to teach."

"State of the Union" Message
January 30, 1961
President John F. Kennedy

"If the present trend continues, out of every 100 children in our schools, 4 or 5 will at one time in their life be inmates of a mental hospital; 4 or 5 others will suffer from serious mental illness, but be treated at home or in a general hospital; 1 or 2 will commit some major crime or delinquency and spend some time in jail or other penal institution; 3 or 4 will suffer from such serious mental difficulty that without special training they will not become self-supporting and self-respecting citizens; and of the rest from 30 to 50 will suffer from minor but crippling mental traits that will impair that degree of happiness and efficiency which they should have in life."

Understanding the Child,
S. R. Laycock

The most recent figures of the United States Department of Health indicate that 1 out of every 10 children will eventually be hospitalized for mental illness.

"Criminals force us to spend each year more than four and two thirds as much on them as we spend on all forms of education,

both public and private . . . Crime experts know that criminals are caused not by lack of education, but by the wrong kind of education. The same is true of many unhappy people."

J. Edgar Hoover, Chief,
Federal Bureau of Investigation

"We certainly cannot expect to develop well-adjusted future citizens unless we begin by staffing our classrooms with well-adjusted teachers . . . There is no reason to expect that teachers unable to conquer their own personality handicaps will be of much help in developing healthy-minded students."

Dr. K. Richard Johnson, President,
National College of Education

"It is well known that problem teachers make problem children. By the same token, a teacher who is well adjusted goes far toward helping children achieve and retain good attitudes."

Dr. Earl James McGrath,
United States Commissioner of Education

"Every experienced administrator is aware of how generally teacher failure is associated with mental or emotional breakdown. Statistics are beginning to appear showing the high incidence of neurotic episodes and experiences in the lives of teachers. The whole problem of mental health in relation to teaching is crystallizing as ready for study."

Leon Mones, Assistant Superintendent in
Charge of Personnel, Newark, New Jersey.

It is with full sympathy and concern that the author opens speculation upon a little-discussed problem in the field of education: the problem of the mentally disturbed teacher. The gravity of this problem is deepened by the fact that it is not only the teacher who suffers, but also, in ways beyond calculation, the children in her charge.

The author's survey has been carried on in 44 school systems in all parts of the United States. He has checked private schools and parochial as well as public school systems. *Every case presented or referred to in this book is an actual, recorded instance,* although naturally names have been altered and localities generalized. The problem is a national one; the varieties of mental disturbance seem widely distributed and any methods of treatment apply to all sections of the land.

The stigma long attached to mental illness still prevails. In spite of the earnest efforts of psychiatrists to change the public's attitude, most persons remain reluctant (if not ashamed) to admit that a relative is in a mental hospital, and friends speak of a mentally afflicted one with lowered voice. Having someone in the family mentally ill is not only a special shame but also a special burden. Dr. Abraham Myerson, author of the standard *Social Psychology,* says in his *Speaking of Man:* "The tragedy of mental illness crushes not only the sick but also the members of their families. Nothing so breaks into the lives of the well as the mental diseases of those with whom they live; nothing so hurts the pride or arouses such devastating inner conflicts."

School systems, despite the value of precise statistics, still cater to this sense of shame by listing teachers retired for disability without specifying whether that disability is physical or mental. Thus, one of the most explosive of educational scandals flared across the headlines when an educator and a doctor spoke the truth. On March 27, 1934, the New York City tabloids bore front-page headlines:

"1,500 TEACHERS CRACKPOTS—
says Board of Education Doctor."

It seems that on March 1 of that year, Dr. Louis Marks, a member of the New York City Board of Examiners, said at a speech at the Women's City Club: "There are probably 1,500 teachers in the City's schools today who are mentally or emotionally unfit

to teach." Some days later, an idle reporter came upon this remark and carried it as a question to Dr. Emil Altman, Chief Medical Officer for the public schools. Dr. Altman's statement was reported as corroborating the examiner's—that 1,500 of the City's 36,000 teachers "are either emotionally unbalanced or insane." The doctor said that he had an actual list of 794 cases and that the total figure was "an estimate justified by the known incidence of mental disability among groups such as teachers."

Dr. Altman gave a few illustrations. He spoke of a teacher he visited: "You could not find a more intellectual and cultured lady. But she was sitting in her classroom, where the temperature was 70°, wearing a fur coat and a hat, and complaining that the room was terribly cold. She said that the janitor kept trying either to roast her or to freeze her, and that he was even sending up fumes like ether through a pipe." There was also a teacher "who believed her class were staring at her continually, who held the leg of a chair near a boy's eye and twisted it, 'to distract their attention from myself.'"

The reporter now had enough material; the headlines flamed.

The sensational headlines naturally created a furor. Hundreds of the tabloids, with varying degrees of mischievous or vindictive anonymity, were spread by children the next morning upon teachers' desks. Parents brought the newspapers to principals as confirmation of what they had always felt about their child's "inhuman teacher." The teachers themselves held emergency meetings, made vehement protests. The High School Teachers Association demanded that Dr. Altman publish a retraction. The Kindergarten-6B Teachers demanded that he be discharged.

Dr. Altman elaborated (I quote the *New York Times* of March 28): "Some teachers who have been classed as unfit several times are still active as teachers despite recommendations for their removal. A check-up showed that several women are commuting to teach classes in the City while under treatment for mental ailments at the Bloomingdale Hospital in White

Plains . . . If the Retirement Board orders them returned to service, we have no alternative under the law but to return them to a classroom . . . I believe that teachers should be protected, but I believe that the interests of the children should be placed first."

Mayor La Guardia responded to the report like a mayor. He expressed himself as not surprised at the statement that 1,500 teachers are mental cases; the percentage is normal. "I think you would find that in the Army, too. But I think the difference here is that you have these people leading children while the child's mind is in a plastic state where it needs care and guidance. That's what makes it different from any other group. The matter does not come under my jurisdiction at all."

The next night, at a special session, the Board of Education unanimously adopted a statement by Dr. Altman. With better psychology than before, Dr. Altman retracted the phraseology while repeating his assertion: "I told the reporter the truth; namely, that what Dr. Marks had said was substantially correct . . . It is sympathy and mistaken kindness that keep these people in their positions. I had no intention of creating the impression that these people are 'insane' in the sense that the layman understands the word, but rather that they are emotionally unstable and in my opinion ought not to be teaching children."

And on the next day the *New York Times,* in an editorial entitled "The Proper Word," suggested that teachers might make the entire incident an object lesson in diction: "Proclaim that there are a lot of unfit teachers and nobody will be much surprised. Announce that there are insane teachers and everybody sits up." It is remarkable that few persons are surprised to hear that many teachers are "unfit." And it is still more remarkable that, after a three-day scandal, a genuinely serious problem should be dismissed with semi-humorous verbiage.

The deeply disturbing feature of this story is not so much the fact of mental illness among teachers as the attitude toward its

revelation. The teachers themselves bristled as though their integrity were attacked. Officials, from the mayor down, shifted responsibility: "the final word is not ours." The press, after playing up the sensational aspect of the story, played down its serious import, so that it need not make inroads on the public conscience or the public pocketbook. The petty pattern of "hush-hush" led to inactivity. Unwillingness to "wash one's dirty linen in public" permitted the fabric to grow still more soiled.

Nowhere in the country is there a frank facing of the problem of the unfit teacher. The President's words quoted on the first page of this book roused no public storm, no urgent demand that proper teachers be found to guide our children.

The hush-hush attitude pervades school systems today. The triune evasive pattern of teacher indignation, official hedging, and public passivity must be broken. When the ostrich hides its face in the sand, it leaves vital spots exposed. School and community officials, and the general public, must face the problem squarely and take immediate steps to alleviate this serious condition. Inactivity helps it to grow worse.

The sorry fact remains that the incidence of mental disturbance among teachers seems higher than among persons of other occupations. In 1948, a study was made by Drs. Harry L. Smith and Nicholas C. Hightower of persons applying for examination at the Mayo Clinic, to discover the incidence of functional disease [neurosis], by which, said the doctors, "we mean emotional illness." In the order of their application, 1,464 patients were studied. The percentage of "functional disease" was as follows: among railroad engineers, 9%; physicians, 17%; farmers, 19%; dentists, 30%; lawyers, 36%; housewives, 36%; clergymen, 39%; nuns, 42%; teachers, 55%. "This is the highest percentage of diagnosis of neurosis of all occupational groups. Their long hours of preparation and study, tenseness while they are at work, confinement and low pay may be factors in this high incidence."

The doctors note that all were teachers in public schools, either

grade school or high school. They further note that all the persons studied had come to be examined; the figures, therefore, tell nothing of the percentage of neurotics in the population as a whole. They are valid, however, as indicating an "occupational hazard" of the teaching profession.

In a survey of several school systems presented in *Mental Hygiene in School Practice,* in 1943 N. Fenton reported that he found 22.5% of the teachers "maladjusted."

While school systems are reluctant to reveal specific cases of mentally or emotionally disturbed superintendents, the National Education Association presents some general statistics. In 1959–60, more than 12% of the country's 8,170 appointed superintendents left their posts. Of these, 169 were dismissed and 810 resigned. Of the latter, 63 resigned "under pressure"; the others presumably left for better-paying work.

Although, according to these statistics and for reasons further elaborated below, the percentage of mentally disturbed teachers is high as compared with that of persons in other fields, it still represents a very small number in contrast with the host of devoted and well-integrated men and women who are giving their years to the development of our country's young. The vast body of the nation's teachers, despite many difficulties in the conditions of their task, work faithfully and well.

It is hoped that this pioneer book in the field will point the way toward fuller understanding, toward prompter and more effective handling, of the persisting mental troubles that beset the educators of the land. Recognition of these potential disturbances, by those responsible for the training of teachers, may help to nip such troubles in the bud. Supervisors—heads of departments, principals, superintendents—more fully cognizant of the symptoms, should respond with keener, quicker, and more sympathetic helpfulness when there is need. Among the nation's 1,400,000 teachers in elementary and high schools, there will inevitably be a continuing minority of the mentally disturbed. Let

revelation. The teachers themselves bristled as though their integrity were attacked. Officials, from the mayor down, shifted responsibility: "the final word is not ours." The press, after playing up the sensational aspect of the story, played down its serious import, so that it need not make inroads on the public conscience or the public pocketbook. The petty pattern of "hush-hush" led to inactivity. Unwillingness to "wash one's dirty linen in public" permitted the fabric to grow still more soiled.

Nowhere in the country is there a frank facing of the problem of the unfit teacher. The President's words quoted on the first page of this book roused no public storm, no urgent demand that proper teachers be found to guide our children.

The hush-hush attitude pervades school systems today. The triune evasive pattern of teacher indignation, official hedging, and public passivity must be broken. When the ostrich hides its face in the sand, it leaves vital spots exposed. School and community officials, and the general public, must face the problem squarely and take immediate steps to alleviate this serious condition. Inactivity helps it to grow worse.

The sorry fact remains that the incidence of mental disturbance among teachers seems higher than among persons of other occupations. In 1948, a study was made by Drs. Harry L. Smith and Nicholas C. Hightower of persons applying for examination at the Mayo Clinic, to discover the incidence of functional disease [neurosis], by which, said the doctors, "we mean emotional illness." In the order of their application, 1,464 patients were studied. The percentage of "functional disease" was as follows: among railroad engineers, 9%; physicians, 17%; farmers, 19%; dentists, 30%; lawyers, 36%; housewives, 36%; clergymen, 39%; nuns, 42%; teachers, 55%. "This is the highest percentage of diagnosis of neurosis of all occupational groups. Their long hours of preparation and study, tenseness while they are at work, confinement and low pay may be factors in this high incidence."

The doctors note that all were teachers in public schools, either

grade school or high school. They further note that all the persons studied had come to be examined; the figures, therefore, tell nothing of the percentage of neurotics in the population as a whole. They are valid, however, as indicating an "occupational hazard" of the teaching profession.

In a survey of several school systems presented in *Mental Hygiene in School Practice,* in 1943 N. Fenton reported that he found 22.5% of the teachers "maladjusted."

While school systems are reluctant to reveal specific cases of mentally or emotionally disturbed superintendents, the National Education Association presents some general statistics. In 1959–60, more than 12% of the country's 8,170 appointed superintendents left their posts. Of these, 169 were dismissed and 810 resigned. Of the latter, 63 resigned "under pressure"; the others presumably left for better-paying work.

Although, according to these statistics and for reasons further elaborated below, the percentage of mentally disturbed teachers is high as compared with that of persons in other fields, it still represents a very small number in contrast with the host of devoted and well-integrated men and women who are giving their years to the development of our country's young. The vast body of the nation's teachers, despite many difficulties in the conditions of their task, work faithfully and well.

It is hoped that this pioneer book in the field will point the way toward fuller understanding, toward prompter and more effective handling, of the persisting mental troubles that beset the educators of the land. Recognition of these potential disturbances, by those responsible for the training of teachers, may help to nip such troubles in the bud. Supervisors—heads of departments, principals, superintendents—more fully cognizant of the symptoms, should respond with keener, quicker, and more sympathetic helpfulness when there is need. Among the nation's 1,400,000 teachers in elementary and high schools, there will inevitably be a continuing minority of the mentally disturbed. Let

us hope that it grows continuously smaller, and that the sufferers are more speedily and more competently helped. If this book awakens educators and the administrators of public funds to take appropriate steps in this direction, it will have largely attained the author's goal.

THE TASK OF THE TEACHER

The conscientious teacher is one of the hardest-working members of the community. The chronic shortage of teachers presses upon those in service an unusually heavy load. This is, of course, labeled an "emergency situation," but the teacher shortage is an emergency that gives every sign of becoming even more grievous. Classes everywhere throughout the country, except in schools of education, are larger than desirable.

The National Education Association, in its report of April 26, 1960, stated that the year's shortage of elementary and high school teachers in the country is 135,000. The annual new supply, the report pointed out, cannot lessen this, as it does not even meet the new demands of the increasing population. Actually needed are 230,000 teachers; likely to enter the profession in the year—according to estimated graduates of training schools and schools of education, etc.—are 95,000, leaving a net shortage of 135,000. This means continuing part-time instruction for many children, crowded classes for many more, and very many young folk confided to substitutes and others who have not met the standards for regular teaching. Los Angeles, to give just one by no means exceptional example, in a staff of 22,331 teachers in 1960 had 3,662 substitutes—over 15%.

Extra assignments (such as patrol, lunchroom, and study-hall supervision) and the "official" or home-room class with its attendance and other records, add non-teaching work of various sorts to the working day. There are few teachers, furthermore, who do not take papers home for reading and correction.

The shortage of teachers has resulted in a heavier classroom

load. As a rule, the National Citizens' Council for Better Schools declares, "Schools that try to hold to quality standards do not allow elementary classes to go above 30 pupils." Actually, the vast majority are nearer 40. In high schools it is more difficult to estimate how many pupils a teacher has. Laboratories can, of course, accommodate fewer children at a time; the gymnasium, on the other hand, can hold many more than the regular classroom. Many cities count a person as a full-time classroom teacher even though she may spend from 1 to 3 periods a day supervising the school's General Organization or Year Book or coaching a team. Thus, in one department of 14 teachers, almost the full time of two teachers was allotted to such extracurricular work, and the actual teaching load of the department was divided among 12 teachers; but the statistics presented it as divided among 14. Even for a full-time teaching staff, the recommended 100 pupils in academic subjects is far short of the reality, which runs closer to 5 classes of some 35 pupils, or a pupil load of 175.

In the classroom, the teacher is under the strain of constant, unremitting alertness. The mere requirements of proper discipline call for undeviating attention. Beyond this, the teacher must stimulate the desire of the children to work harmoniously with one another, and to do their best. The children must learn and, what is even more difficult, they must be taught how to study, how to learn by themselves. And they must be imbued with the desire to continue doing these things after their school years.

As, in most classes, children of varying degrees of ability are enrolled together, the teacher must find work that will stimulate and challenge the brighter pupils while at the same time urging on the less gifted. The one who can concentrate at length and the one of short attention-span, the alert whose mind leaps ahead and the daydreamer and the dullard whose minds turn aside—all must be helped to realize such potentialities as they have, to reach out to awareness of the opportunities and demands of the

time, the advantages and obligations of democratic living. The teacher must foster not only a person able to make a living, but also a decent and, we trust, an enlightened and cultured citizen.

There have been voices, of course, crying out against the heavy burdens of the teacher. A. V. Keliher, in *Mental Hygiene* (1950) states emphatically: "I must warn you that the harassment of teachers is more prevalent than you think," and lists four areas of extraneous pressure:

1. *Too Many "Surprises."* The boy the teacher next door has sent out of the room for misbehavior: please keep him in your class for the rest of the week. There must be a special show next Thursday for the Superintendent; what will your class put on? How many essays can you have written, corrected, and rewritten by the end of the week, for the local paper's new contest? Then Johnny, who is a well-behaved boy, accidentally knocks the filmstrip machine off your desk.

2. *Too Many Interruptions.* Monitors and messages come blithely in at any time. In the midst of your test, Bang! there's a Fire Drill. Many principals feel that if you are informed in advance of a drill it loses its emergency value. Unexpected visitors come as they please. Minor administrative requests delay your lesson.

3. *Too Many Extra Duties.* Yard duty, hall duty, stair duty; lunchroom; study hall; after-school detention, not to count various special assignments such as running a club or arranging a pageant or an Arbor Day exercise or a school outing.

4. *Too Much Paper Work.* Attendance reports, lateness blanks, absence notices to parents, statistical reports. And, as every teacher is not *ipso facto* a good clerk, there is sometimes more tension in checking and reworking and chafing over such items than in the actual teaching.

H. C. Lindgren, in *Mental Health in Education* (1954), points out the many persons under whose scrutiny the teacher works: children, assistant principal or chairman, principal, subject super-

visor, superintendent, parents, other teachers, school board, and the community. "All of these individuals and groups feel that they have, or ought to have, something to say about the way in which he does his job; they all have thoughts and feelings about what kind of person he should be." Lindgren concludes that "the teacher is one of the most 'exposed' persons, psychologically speaking, in the world today."

SOME PROBLEMS OF THE CHILDREN

The teacher is, of course, most directly exposed to a roomful of children, quick to sense anything out of the beaten path. And the teacher must remember, while seeking to meet the responsibilities and the challenge of her post, that each child possesses a unique and differently responding personality. In the light of that personality the guidance must come, to help the individual child, tugged upon by the diverse tensions of this tense age.

It is hardly necessary to do more than mention the various pressures that play upon our young. They find their elders in a state of moral flux, of a questioning or blunt ignoring of moral values. The urgencies and the anomalies of sex are thrust upon them, not only in their own experience of broken homes, but also in motion pictures, on the covers of paperbacks and magazines, and in the headlines of tabloids.

Violence is equally a part of their experience. A recent check by the National Association for Better Radio and Television found in the television programs of just one week, *before 9 P.M.*, 161 murders, 60 "justifiable killings," 2 suicides, 192 attempted murders, 83 robberies, 15 kidnapings, 24 conspiracies to commit murder, 7 attempted lynchings, 21 jailbreaks, 6 dynamitings, 2 cases of arson, and 2 instances of physical torture. This tabulation represents only major crimes; there were beyond these, for example, "countless" threats to kill, sluggings, and scenes of mob violence and lawlessness.

The general standards of public and private behavior are

lowered, and this debasing is cynically accepted until dishonesty and chicanery seem to many the normal practice in both business and government. Cheating on examination or on income tax reports is a feather in the cap of the one who "gets away with it." Of 200 students questioned in a college in 1960, 156 admitted having given or received help on examinations. In the cities, crowded and slum living conditions persist, with racial and religious bias engendering bitterness on both sides. In many sections, it is dangerous for a teenager not to be a member of a gang, and the codes of these gangs hardly incline their members toward peace and order. The gang leader often owes his place to his possession of firearms, and the variety of home-made weapons ranges from the zip gun through the old cestus (the leather knuckle-guard of the Roman boxer) new-studded with nails, to a metal chain worn, until the emergency, innocently as a belt.

To say that the United States has the highest crime rate and the highest rate of juvenile delinquency in the world may mean merely that we are more strict in our definitions and more accurate in our records than some other lands, for these today are world-wide problems, as are the uneasiness and the unsettled state produced by the cold war, by the dangers of radiation and fall-out, by the threat of widespread nuclear devastation. But, within the range of our present problem, these aspects of life disturb the growing children, making them more restless and reckless, and thus multiply the pressures that bear upon the teacher.

In the more direct contacts of teacher and children, there are many elements of strain. Most problems of human relationships are problems less of action than of interaction. Often what happens in the classroom is a transference from the child's life outside. The teacher who glows with the tender affection a child has manifested may actually be receiving a love intended for the child's mother; in the same way, hostility toward a teacher may be a transference of a feeling against someone at home. The

teacher's attitude is likewise colored by such associations, when a child, with or without the teacher's conscious awareness of the linkage, reminds her of a person or an episode in her past.

On the other hand, conditions in the classroom may also contribute to, or aggravate, mental troubles in both teacher and child. The teacher is, in all such cases, the crucial force, because the mentally disturbed teacher inevitably disturbs the children, whereas the troubled child can be helped only by an understanding and loving teacher.

In order to achieve a comprehensive view of the problems that beset the teacher, it is therefore essential to note the major ways in which children's attitudes and desires may be distorted and frustrated, with the consequent classroom dangers the teacher has to face. To what extent a disturbed teacher creates or complicates these, or in what measure such a teacher can be expected to relieve or ameliorate the conditions, would require another volume to explore. For our present purpose, it will serve briefly to indicate situations and types of children that may give rise to representative and major school problems. In presenting these, let us follow the suggestions and the illustrations of the New York State Mental Health Committee.

1. *The Slow Learner.* In a seventh-grade class of children of varied intelligence, some 7 could not keep up with the rest of the class. A few began to flee from their daily defeat by resorting to truancy. A couple tried to hide their inability to understand behind aggressive, disorderly, attention-seeking misbehavior in the classroom. One became more and more withdrawn.

Somehow, such children have to be given a challenge within reach of their powers, and a sense of successful accomplishment besides.

2. *The Quicker Child.* Frank came to a first-grade class already able to write numbers up to 999 and to add and subtract up to 20. The teacher, who began by instructing the class in counting up to 20, sent home Frank's report, stating that he could count up to 20.

The entire class moved ahead at one steady pace. Frank grew more and more bored. Deciding that school was a waste of time, he withdrew more and more into his daydreaming. By the time Frank reaches adolescence, will he be a confirmed daydreamer, remote from—feeling superior to—his classmates and associates, snug and smug in his private dream world? How much of his great potential has already been vitiated by too elementary classwork, consequent boredom, and removal from actuality?

The group experience may for many reasons be not meaningful to some of the individuals in the group. There should be a stimulus, a challenge, to sustain every child's curiosity, interest, and effort.

3. *The Suppressed Child.* The domineering person may be completely unaware of that quality. Particularly is this true in the classroom, where such a teacher may, to herself and even to her supervisor, seem to be a superb disciplinarian. Thus, Miss S is proud of the fact that she is a "strong" teacher. The slightest thrust of class-disturbing conduct is instantly squelched. Some children may be basically unaffected by this repressive atmosphere. Some may have all expression of their own personality stifled. Stronger spirits, unable to express their resentment in classroom rebellion, may seek other aggressive action. A few may become tale-bearers, to get into the good graces of the severe teacher. Others may fight among themselves, or misbehave elsewhere in the school, as soon as they are beyond the control of such a teacher's repressive personality. Some of the vandalism in the neighborhood has been traced to a couple of her pupils. A few, instead of developing bad relationships with those around, fashion their repression and bottled-up resentment into little nervous habits and other personal maladjustments.

There should be a sense of class co-operation, of sharing responsibilities on the path to a common goal. There should be what has been called a "permissive" atmosphere—one that does not lack sense of direction but implies free acceptance of that direction through recognition of its value.

4. *The Hostile Child.* Two children with potential leadership ability, but with different ideas as to what the class should do, get into a heated argument. The democratic teacher lets the class decide by vote, but a small group of die-hards join the defeated leader. They oppose all suggestions coming from either the teacher or the other children. There is no logic in their opposition, only emotion. Soon aggressive hostility develops—toward others in the class, toward authority, toward school property, perhaps toward persons and property outside the school. Pressure is put on the weaker of the other children; it is suggested that being "on the teacher's side" means that they are "apple-shiners," traitors to their own group. In many of the children, personality stresses and strains increase.

Natural qualities of leadership should be recognized and utilized, in harmonious co-operative endeavor for the entire group.

5. *Excessive Competition.* Athletic rivalry between P and Q High Schools was so keen that when Q's basketball team was defeated for the third consecutive year, the coach was forced to resign. The new coach put all his energies into producing a winning team. Pupil participation in intramural sports fell off, but attendance at the school games grew. When the star center of the team failed in mathematics, the question of his eligibility roused heated factions among the students, in the faculty, in the community. The school morale, which had been high even while the team was losing, was disrupted by the storm. Public relations suffered; the faculty found it difficult to regain their perspective; parents were unduly involved; the ethical attitudes of the pupils were shaken; every school activity felt the impact; more pupils, as they reached the legally permitted age, dropped out of school.

This development, some aspects of which are all too frequent on the college level, has at times so distorted high school activities as to result in the forbidding of interscholastic athletic contests. In many minds, if not in whole communities, sportsmanship has been replaced by "gamesmanship," by a call for victory at any price.

There should be a better balance between co-operation within the group and rivalry without, and a restoration of the old-fashioned notion that doing one's honest best is more important than coming out on top.

6. *Overemphasis on Examinations and Grades.* In many high schools non-academic courses—courses not acceptable toward college entrance credit—are branded in the minds of pupils and teachers as "dumbbell" courses. Some pupils, therefore, take the courses that require the passing of statewide ("Regents") examinations even though they might profit more by the other work. They thus develop anxieties and, if they fail, frustrations. Others, who are competent but whose interests do not lie in scholastic pursuits, take the "prestige" courses, doing just enough work to get by and never developing genuine interests or proper habits of work.

The situation may grow even worse when the school sorts its pupils by their marks, or establishes "honor classes." Then parents add to the pressure; they goad their children on or scold them for laziness or stupidity; they wheedle or complain to teachers and principal. Artificial antagonisms and rivalries may develop among the children—feelings of insecurity and inferiority on the one hand, of smugness and self-satisfied superiority on the other.

So long as there is not room for every applicant to enter the college of his choice, ratings are likely to be a major consideration when the colleges select their Freshman classes. The high school, while facing this fact, also has to make parents and pupils understand that grades are but partial measures of a child's growth and progress. Ratings have little to do with the objectives of education. Each child must, without invidious comparisons, be encouraged to exercise his capabilities to the full, and to feel that he has won his teachers' and his fellow-students' esteem for his full endeavor, at whatever point on the academic scale that endeavor sets him.

7. *Conflicting Standards of Home and School.* In many homes today, one finds not active immorality, but rather moral indifference, no thought of ethical values, no concern beyond the immediate avenues of action. The family may be living from hand to mouth, trying to make ends meet with enough left over for the installment on the TV set, and perhaps next month on that washing machine. The children may be slapped down when they get too much in the way, but morals have lapsed to a mere handling of the immediate situation. With children from such homes, the problem is to help them discover more pervasive principles of conduct.

In some homes, however, attitudes unconsciously developed in the children differ diametrically from the democratic and ethical principles the school should seek to inculcate. This is one of the fundamental causes of trouble in the school and failure of proper development in the child. Two cases may suffice to indicate the problem, when the family standards and the national standards conflict.

Billy's father operates a "racket" on the edge of the law. Sometimes the family has to pinch for food; sometimes money flows in and is gaily and freely spent. The family thoughts about their living hinge upon the notion of luck. When luck is "against you," you grab what you can; you "pay back" those who thwart you; you "get away with it" if you're smart. Billy shrugs off any concept of "responsibility to the group" and remains cold to class discussion of the Bill of Rights. Billy is always ready to bet on anything with the other boys in the class. He may be a shrewd and covert instigator to breaches of discipline and attacks upon authority, though he knows how to duck out of blame; and he scoffs at those who are reluctant to take a chance.

Susan, on the other hand, comes from a wealthy and socially prominent family. She seems a happy child. But her family behavior patterns are based on the notion that you don't have to work if you don't want to, and that rules and standards in general

apply to "the working class." Susan is bright but lazy; she feels that she should be above the regulations that bind the other children. Susan's teachers, especially after Susan's mother has visited the school, tend somewhat to accept Susan's point of view about herself; Susan is likely, for example, to be chosen as heroine of the class play. When examinations or other occasions, however, force Susan to be measured by the general class standards, she grows rebellious, hostile, or (perhaps covering an inner fear) disdainfully remote. In her personal contacts with other pupils, Susan may be gracious but she is frequently condescending. As a result, despite her natural and social advantages, Susan is not liked—though some of her fellow pupils sycophantically flock about her for the privileges to be gained: rides in her car, invitations to her house and her parties, and the like.

Each of these children, therefore, is not only a center of individual disturbance, but also a source of possible tensions and conflicts, or distorted values, in those around.

When the social and the moral values of the home differ from those of the school, the effort, or the unconscious process, of converting the child from the one to the other may subject him to severe mental and emotional strain. Furthermore, there is often a double problem: to win the child to accept the healthful group ideals and to win the healthy group to accept the child. When every day the child re-enters a self-centered home atmosphere, ill-attuned or indifferent to the best interests of the country, it is clear that only a thoroughly responsive, understanding, competent and loving teacher, who has woven her class into a happily cooperating and freely functioning unit, can draw such a child to a proper sense of democratic and ethical values and make him, while preserving his individual integrity, a worthy and accepted member of the social group.

8. *Lack of Love.* Miss D was a drillmaster. She was not popular with her pupils, and their parents were glad when the children moved out of her class. But she got results. The principal, indeed,

considered her a better teacher than Miss F, who taught the same children in the next higher grade. He held this opinion because Miss D's children attained higher marks in the final grade examinations. These marks continually puzzled Miss F, because she found that she had to re-teach the children much that they supposedly knew.

Miss D complained about the ungratefulness of the children; she taught them so well, yet they never came back to see her! Many of them did return to visit Miss F, to ask her advice, to tell her their problems and their hopes; in due time, some of her former children named their children after her.

Facts can be driven into children's heads temporarily by rote and fear. What lingers is likely to be not the fact but the fear. Or hate, which takes fear's place. Children grow in understanding where there is love.

9. *Lack of Attention.* In a first-grade class, 10 of the 35 little ones were frightened by the presence of so many children; they needed the reassuring attention of an adult. They had not yet cut the silver cord; but Mother was not near by. The teacher could perhaps give 3 or 4 such children the support needed to lead them gently into group activities. To give 10 children such individual attention would necessitate neglecting the general activities of the class, with 35 little individuals each seeking security and opportunity for interested growth.

The result of too large classes is that everyone—teacher and each individual child—suffers a sense of insecurity and strain.

Such difficulties are met by teachers of children generally regarded as normal. Beyond these, unfortunately, about 12% of the school population suffer from special learning problems. To cope with these, the United States Office of Education reports, 60,000 more specially trained teachers are needed. This need, as the *New York Times* of January 15, 1961, mildly understated, "is unlikely to be met in the near future." For not only are there few persons tempted to the special training, but also there are very

few schools equipped to provide it. In most communities, therefore, these retarded or otherwise handicapped children are perforce kept in regular classes, where they add immeasurably to the teacher's problems. The large cities, in some degree, have special classes for the deaf, the blind, the mentally retarded, and may provide some measure of home instruction for the confined. Elsewhere, it is little exaggeration to say, 1 out of every 8 children in the regular classroom is so handicapped as to require special and expert attention that the teacher is not equipped to provide. The consequently neglected child becomes, therefore, an ever-increasingly difficult problem, beyond the many other burdens the teacher must bear.

There are many more matters that affect the attitudes and the emotional development of the child, such as flexibility of curriculum, proper awareness and choice of goals, modern equipment—even availability of rooms. Such problems are outside the immediate concern of this book, save to note that they, too, by adding to the strain upon the children, may contribute to disturbance in the teacher. And every disturbed teacher means class after class of troubled children.

The Mental Health Committee, noting that "Good mental health is not achieved merely by the removal of obstacles," lists some characteristics of an acceptable teacher:

"Teachers should be persons who:

"a. can influence people without dominating them,

"b. can arouse interest and maintain motivation without establishing fear,

"c. can create a feeling of mutual confidence between teacher and pupil,

"d. can bolster a child's self-confidence without making him un-self-critical,

"e. can understand and accept with tolerance the wide diversity of personalities,

"f. can keep the 'long view' and avoid becoming disturbed over daily frustrations,

"g. have a high degree of personal integrity and interest in other people."

Add to these simple requirements just a few other easy qualifications—

a. knowledge of the subject matter,

b. knowledge of methods of teaching and classroom management,

c. clerical ability,

d. imperturbability in the face of frequent interruption,

e. poised self-control in meeting constant classroom surprise,

f. understanding of child and adolescent impulses to misbehavior, and readiness to divert these into proper educational activity, and

g. power to carry on all the aspects of teaching and guidance in spite of personal troubles and extraneous difficulties—

and you can see why so many of our intelligent youth do not hurry to be placed on the non-existing waiting lists of the only uncrowded schools of higher education, the teacher-training schools!

For all of this, the teacher is generally one of the most poorly paid workers in the community. A teacher with a Master's degree, in his twenty-fourth year of service, remarked bitterly on coming to school one morning that his bus driver had stopped for his pay—and it was higher than the teacher's. There are graduates of high schools—especially from the science courses—out less than a year, who are earning more than those who taught them. Men teachers with families, unless the wives are also working, usually have to take a second job, either after school or during the much-needed (and much-envied) summer vacation. One of those men, whose record comes within the scope of this volume, worked evenings and Saturdays as a bartender.

There was a time when the teacher partly offset his poor pa by the measure of compensation he found in the prestige an the respect accorded him in the community. Now this has vi tually disappeared: in public, in parent-teachers meetings, eve in the classroom itself. The individual teacher can still wi respect; the profession has lost it.

What would be an amusing, if it were not a sad, illustration c the general attitude toward the teaching profession slips into th book *Words on Paper,* by Roy H. Copperud, published in Sep tember, 1960. This book calls itself "A Manual of Prose Style fc Professional Writers, Reporters, Authors, Editors, Publishers, an Teachers." In a section on "titles," referring to an Italian sopranc the book four times names Renata Tebaldi; for an art dealer it names Joseph Duveen. Choosing no actual pedagogue, it find no contrived name more usable than Superintendent of Schools– hammered home three times in the one paragraph—"Dr. Geral *Pedant*"! A pedant, in case you haven't it fully in mind, is: "1. person who lays unnecessary stress on minor or trivial points o learning, displaying a scholarship lacking in judgment or sens of proportion. 2. a narrow-minded teacher who insists on exac adherence to a set of arbitrary rules." Elsewhere in the book th author writes: "pedantically and, as usually follows, erroneously.' As *Words on Paper* carries on its jacket recommendations by th editor of the *Christian Science Monitor* and by a professor in a graduate school of Columbia University, Mr. Everyman can hardly be expected to do other than concur in so highly approved an opinion of our educators.

The lowering of prestige, however, especially in smaller com- munities, has not changed the comparatively high personal ex- pectations. A teacher must look good—must, with whatever strain, live well—in the community. In the little towns, where teachers are hired by the year, the new teacher lives in a glass cage. She must not only serve as a model, she must also take part in communal activities. In church work and in various charity

and public health drives as well, she is expected to be a leader.

She has, nevertheless, in some such towns, a problem of social adjustment. Many single women teachers, assigned to a strange town, complain that families do not invite them, that women their own age look upon them as intruders and rivals, that except for church formalities and other semi-official activities they are left to lonely lives.

When all these burdens and sources of tension, merely mentioned here, are weighed, it becomes easier to understand why there is an ever-increasing shortage of teachers. Persons with the same amount of study have, in other fields, prospects of more pleasant working conditions with much higher earnings. It should therefore be no surprise that the problem is rendered still more acute by the fact that, not only are too few young people training for or planning to enter the teaching profession, but also those who are seem to be of poorer quality. While apparently the requirements for a beginning teacher are being maintained at the same level, in many parts of the country teachers are allowed to take courses toward meeting these requirements while carrying on their first three years of teaching—which, in practice, is actually a lowering of standards. Nearly every state also issues "emergency" or temporary certificates to teachers who fail to meet the regular standards.

High school graduates in various cities have been asked to indicate what profession they plan to follow. In one boys' high school, some 700 to 800 graduates a year have been asked that question through the past decade; 6 to 8 a year have named teaching. But more significant than this small number is the fact that those who aspire to teach are not 90% students, but students with a 4-year average of 65% to 75%. Manifestly those unsure of themselves, those afraid of the competition of the outside world, are ready to seek what seems the sheltered cloister, less well paid but with promise of security, of the teaching profession. While there is ever greater need, in this crowded world

of tensions, for educators who are integrated and adjusted personalities, there enter the schools instead more teachers who are timid and unsure, who are likely themselves to succumb to their many pressures, and, instead of guiding children toward sane and wholesome lives, themselves fall into the ranks of the emotionally disturbed and the mentally ill.

PRESENT HANDLING OF THE MENTALLY DISTURBED TEACHER

It requires no lengthy examination of schools of education to discover that they pay the problem of the mentally disturbed teacher virtually no attention. Courses to help the future teacher to understand and safeguard against possible mental disturbance, to sense the incipience of trouble within herself and to know what to do about it, are lamentably lacking.

The aspirant to teach in a city school, after courses in the history of education, methods of teaching and of classroom management, and perhaps child psychology, takes a written examination that is divided into two parts: subject matter and pedagogy. If the candidate passes this, she comes before a Board of Examiners for an oral test which includes, of course, an appraisal of her personality. If she survives this test, there is a physical examination. This passed, she awaits her assignment to teach. But, of the 44 major school systems questioned in this regard, *not a single one has a psychiatrist on its Board of Examiners.* Outside the cities, a would-be teacher has but to complete the work at a teacher-training school and apply for a state-wide license.

The future supervisor, rising from the ranks of the teachers, is similarly unequipped for mental emergencies. At best, she may go back to a school of education and there find a course in "abnormal psychology"; more probably, she will take further courses in supervision and administration. She should be trained to recognize the early stages of mental disturbance, and to act sympathetically, understandingly, expeditiously, and effectively

—while also discriminating between difficulties arising from temporary environmental pressures and more deep-seated personality disturbances.

The need for such courses is beginning to be recognized. Also, there is some awakening, in the more enlightened communities, to the need for psychologists or psychiatrists, as well as experts in pedagogy and the academic subjects, to sit on the Boards of Examiners. Yet, it is assuredly true throughout the country that, at present, the vast majority of supervisors—assistants, heads of departments, principals, subject supervisors, superintendents—have been and continue to be without training with respect to this deep-rooted problem. The methods of handling the mentally disturbed teacher have been catch-as-catch-can.

One consequence of the lack of training in the problems of mental health and in the recognition of the symptoms of mental disease is that many teachers thus afflicted continue to teach classes for years. They may be considered eccentric, hard to get along with, unco-operative "cranks," but they are left in charge of children until some action away from school, some thrust of their illness outside of the classroom, brings them first to public and then to official attention, whereupon a long record of classroom difficulties is revealed.

Undoubtedly there are others whose illness is never diagnosed, who until they retire fill class after class with resentment and hate. Pupils and parents may complain, but never with facts significant enough to warrant decisive action. Without the accident of publicity in their own lives, such teachers continue to poison the system and infect the children with their own distortions. Examples of such extraneous discovery will be cited in this book. In truth, it seems safe to declare that, in a majority of the cases of forced retirement, the action leading to the teacher's dismissal has been initiated because of behavior and of complaints not directly connected with classroom conduct.

Most of those ultimately retired for mental disability have been

allowed to teach too long. In the great majority of the psychiatrists' reports there appear the exasperated questions: "Why wasn't this teacher reported long ago? Why has this condition been permitted to exist through all these years?" In the meantime, the delay has endangered the future life of the teacher, for the hope of happy recovery dwindles geometrically with the time preceding treatment; the work of the school has often been disturbed if not disrupted; and the children in the classes of the teacher have suffered harm that may discolor all their lives.

Kindness as well as ignorance enters the picture. In most school systems, a teacher is given an annual rating of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.* When a teacher who has been rated Satisfactory for 10 years—sometimes 25 years—suddenly has trouble maintaining discipline in class, everyone naturally "pitches in" to help. Troubles at home, loss of a loved one, or some other heavy blow, are usually near enough to take the blame for the change in the teacher, and colleagues and supervisors lend sympathetic hands. The teacher next door drops in with a quieting command when the noise grows too loud or too insistent; the most troublesme children are shifted to another class; the principal tries to placate complaining parents and is officially blind and deaf, hoping that the teacher will soon be her old efficient and pleasant self once more. In this fond hope the years drag by, until the teacher has reached the age of compulsory retirement or until some violent or climactic incident forces immediate action, by which time the teacher's mental health has hopelessly deteriorated, and the parents and children heave a great sigh of relief that she has at last been removed.

Sometimes, with younger teachers, or with a new principal, there will be a tendency to gloss over and to endure what seem constant but minor difficulties, petty problems of discipline, dis-

* Throughout this book, Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory, with a capital S or U, refers to the official rating and not to the actual quality of the teaching.

agreeable traits of personality, just to keep the peace. Every principal wants a good record for his school. The new principal may be thinking of his permanent license; the older one may have in mind a district superintendency that will soon be vacant. Beyond these legitimate though personal ambitions is the proper desire to serve the community and to have the school recognized as a strong force for good. This naturally implies a teaching staff united in skill and purpose, dedicated to its task, with all deviations smoothed into one strong co-operative front.

There are, as we shall see, occasions when sympathetic assistance enables a teacher to overcome a temporarily troubling upset; there are others, unfortunately more frequent, when the outside assistance permits the inner disorder to work unchecked to disaster. The supervisor is not yet trained to discriminate between the two. As one petulant principal exclaimed: "I am an administrator, not a psychiatrist!" A good educational supervisor should be something of both.

Look for a moment at the record of Cora Elman, a woman of 40, who rushed into her principal's office, snatched a report from his desk, and hurried out to make a physical attack upon the teacher who had filed it. The principal's subsequent report to the School Board listed other such conflicts of Miss Elman with her colleagues, and continued: "These are typical cases illustrating the difficulties my staff and I have experienced in dealing with her for more than 10 years. I have discussed her with my assistant superintendent and I have followed his advice, which was to treat Miss Elman kindly and tactfully and to overlook the little things, such as her shouting at pupils and berating teachers (and me too) for imaginary offenses or insults. I have given up talking to her or supervising her because I know that in one way or another she will embarrass me. The last time I went into her room to supervise a lesson, she called to me before all her pupils: 'Is there anything I can do for you? Are you looking for anything?' I walked toward her to tell her quietly that I wished to observe

the lesson, when she shouted: 'Don't come near me! If you have anything to say, say it, unless you are ashamed of it. But keep away from me.' I left the room and reported the incident to my superintendent, who again advised me to 'Keep away from her,' 'Leave her alone,' 'She's a crackpot.' I felt that I had done my duty in bringing the matter to the attention of my superior."

Thus two supervisors acquiesced in a policy of silence, broken —after 10 years—by the sick teacher's outburst of violence. The consulted psychiatrist reported: "There is no question that the teacher has been suffering from paranoia for a long time." Miss Cora Elman was then retired.

One more reason, unfortunately an urgent practical consideration, leads principals to overlook troubles until they grow too big to ignore: the difficulty of replacing the teacher, especially if the work is in a limited or specialized field.

James Necker was an always Satisfactory elementary school shop teacher aged 48. He might have gone on teaching for years had not several persons complained directly to the Superintendent, not about his school work, but about money that he owed them; he had failed to keep promise after promise to pay. When Mr. Necker was called to the Board, the startled superintendent recorded: "His appearance was shockingly slovenly. His trousers were baggy. His coat had buttons missing and holes caused by cigarette burns; his collar was torn and dirty, his shirt torn and stained. The absence of teeth in his upper and lower jaws made him look older than his age, and interfered with his speech to such a degree that his words were frequently incomprehensible."

Asked to explain, the principal wrote: "Mr. Necker is a good teacher, well liked by the boys he teaches; in fact, he is very popular. The boys know his weakness for alcohol, but never 'carry on' when his condition is not normal. I have spoken to him repeatedly and have talked with his pastor. One of my teachers visited him when he was ill last year (pneumonia), and found

him lying on a dirty, sheetless mattress in a dirty, disordered room in a run-down boarding house. But he is a good teacher and I hope in time that he will give up alcohol. I know he is trying hard, and I want to help him. I supervise him carefully and his work is not suffering. He is liked not only by the children but by his colleagues as well, and I have never had complaints from parents. If he were retired, I should have to employ a Common Branch substitute (as you know, it is next to impossible to get one who can teach shopwork) and I would be obliged to close the shop. I have realized for some time that Mr. Necker is not an ideal teacher; but I believe that nothing will be lost and something will be gained if you take no action to retire him until teachers of shopwork again become available. I know that you will understand my position and deal sympathetically with Mr. Necker. I believe he is not beyond redemption." Despite this eloquent plea for Rip Van Winkle Necker, he was retired by the Board.

Another reason that may influence kind-hearted supervisors to continue the service of mentally disturbed teachers is the lack of adequate provision for their retirement, which would often involve lengthy and costly treatment. If there are no family funds available, the teacher, retired before she is eligible for full pension rights, would inevitably become a public charge.

One projective device for handling a troublesome teacher is to have her transferred. This at least relieves the suffering school. The kindly thought behind a transfer is that a change of environment, a change of supervisor if there has been a personality clash, may ameliorate the teaching conditions, hence restore the teacher to good morale and effective work. There are, of course, cases where this is true—instances too, as we shall see, where many teachers have sought transfer from one school when the core of trouble has lain not with the teacher but rather in the mental state of the principal. In this question of transfer, once

more, the discernment—and the training, alas not yet provided—of the supervisors must come into play. For however far a bird may fly, it takes its tail along: if the trouble is within the teacher, a transfer merely shifts the trouble to another principal and other children. This may go on for school after school.

Mary Comers, teaching for 14 years, had been transferred 8 times before her Unsatisfactory ratings led to a mental examination and the diagnosis: "Psychoneurosis, with paranoid tendencies."

Arthur Meeker taught typewriting in a girls' high school. Several girls complained that, as he leaned over to show them how to type, his hands touched, and lingered upon, their thighs or their breasts. They also protested that his language was undignified, if not obscene, alleging, for example, that he never pronounced the *f* when he gave the order: "Shift the keys!" When Mr. Meeker was confronted with these charges, he brought forward some girls who testified that they had never seen or heard him do anything improper. He was transferred to another school —and to 6 more schools—before he was summoned to the superintendent upon entirely different charges. He was accused of having helped several girls to compose and typewrite a letter complaining of another teacher's severity in class. This entirely different matter brought about an examination of Mr. Meeker's record. Thereupon many complaints of molestation were revealed. Part of the subsequent inquiry runs:

"*Question:* Did you admire the cross Miss Halpin wore, and touch her breast?

"*Answer:* No.

"*Q:* Did you show any sexy pictures to any girl?

"*A:* No. [The complaint specified gestures that accompanied the display.]

"*Q:* Did you touch Miss Hinson's breasts with both your hands?

"*A:* No.

"*Q:* Did you slap and touch Miss Raney on her buttocks?
"*A:* No."

And so on, through charges by 18 girls at his present school.

"*Q:* Why did these girls pick you out for complaint?
"*A:* It's a conspiracy to get me out."

After children in 8 schools had had the experience of Mr. Meeker's handling, he was diagnosed as a psychopathic personality with a paranoid condition, and was retired from teaching.

Many more cases could be cited of transfer upon transfer until a serious condition became aggravated beyond remedy. Mrs. Edna T. Brockton was transferred, at the request of principals, to 8 different schools before, at the age of 52, she had a climactic breakdown. Miss Gladys Horton bullied her way through 6 schools until an irate parent said to the superintendent: "I just want to murder Miss Horton. My boy has heart trouble and anyone who lays hands on him will get plenty of trouble from me." And at last Miss Horton had a principal who saw clearly and advised: "Don't transfer her; she won't get along with anyone in any place at any time." Mrs. Dora Richfield, at 43, had been transferred 7 times and had been granted several leaves of absence. Toward the end of one of these leaves, her principal wrote: "If there is a question of returning Mrs. Richfield to active service, I respectfully request that she be not assigned to this school where she is known to pupils, teachers, and parents. If you return her here, you should be prepared to receive a delegation of parents who will protest her assignment." Before her leave ended, Mrs. Richfield committed suicide.

Transferring a sick teacher diminishes hopes of remedy while it spreads the evil.

In educators outside the classroom—clerks, librarians, and especially the various degrees of supervisor—it is easier to put up

with "eccentricities." Indeed, it is hard to do otherwise. Spokesmen for educational systems, we find, are extremely reluctant to admit that persons in such responsible posts as those of principal or superintendent may become mentally disturbed, to such a degree as to require removal from the system. And in virtually every such case noted by the author, of elementary or high school principal or assistant superintendent, the person involved managed to avoid formal charges, or to keep the case pending until mandatory retirement age was reached.

Misguided or mentally ill principals have sometimes elevated clerks to positions of arbitrary authority, or permitted them to usurp such power. This properly produces dissatisfaction among the teachers, who feel that a wall has been set between them and their natural leader. And a principal who, as it were, retires while still coming to school, certainly leaves much to be desired and may indeed be suffering mental deterioration.

Where the clerk herself, however, in her own proper functioning, has become incompetent, her colleagues may "cover" for her. And this may seem to do little harm, save to consciences and to the community's treasury.

Thomas Browning had reached 41 years of good service and the age of 62, as one of four clerks in a midwestern high school, when his mind gave way. He became a harmless but quite incoherent chatterer. The other three clerks divided his work among them. Thomas was "assigned" to the supply room. There he chatted with all and sundry, busied himself with harmless tasks, and opened the door for all who came with requisitions. Each month he set a new paper fringe around the room, of varicolored papers cut into geometric patterns. For one period a day, however, he had to cover the office telephone while the clerk in charge ate lunch. Teachers and the conveniently oblivious principal merely avoided making calls during that hour, but persons trying to reach someone at the school were met with such a torrent of helpfully proffered meaningless talk that inquiries came in.

Quickly an honor student from the study hall was trained to handle the switchboard. (From this grew one benefit. The honor student proved to be an excellent worker, and soon the telephone was covered every period by a volunteer honor student from the study hall, freeing the overburdened clerks for other duties.) For 8 years, under the administration of two principals, Thomas Browning chatted away his time in the supply room, with 1 hour in the main office, until he reached the age of mandatory retirement. The other clerks, with the rest of the faculty officially unaware, united to protect a man who had given 41 years of faithful and effective service, until he was entitled to full pension retirement rights.

What harm is done by mentally or morally maladjusted teachers may also be hard to determine. There are cases involving principles or policies regarding which the Boards of Education must set the criteria. A clear-cut instance is the question as to whether or not a Communist should be permitted to teach in the public schools. Here the supervisor has little discretion; he must follow the policy laid down by the Board. But other matters come, more questionably, under his judgment. How about a kleptomaniac? Should a person who keeps order in the classroom, who shows her supervisors that she can teach a good lesson, a woman whom the children like but who every now and again feels a compulsion to filch something from a store—should such a person be permitted to continue teaching? The story of one who was will be presented. Many people, however, may question whether such a person cannot but have personality failings, of which the kleptomania is merely a symptom, that inevitably will leave a mark upon her pupils.

And what about the woman living in adultery? The woman with a history of sex adventure? In one such case, the psychiatrist to whom the teacher confessed her erotic divagations declared that he could not on that account recommend her severance from the school system. "She is a good teacher, regardless of her sex

life." Is that the consensus of the community? And what shall we do with the homosexual? Rely upon the Rorschach Test and the psychiatrist's report and dismiss her, even though the impulse remains latent? Or shall we "be fair to the teacher" and await the overt act, with the future of children in the scales?

In some cases the deterioration is so clear and the danger so imminent as to leave no question, no choice. You have, however, already read the eloquent plea of the principal for the retention of his alcoholic shop teacher. And what if the manifest deterioration be a temporary break in an otherwise effective but now overstrained personality? Or what if the sex charges be false? Some teacher histories rise as warnings against too hasty judgment and too prompt action.

Norman Kopp, a 40-year-old evening school teacher in a Middle Atlantic state, was not prepossessing in appearance. His nose was pointed, his mouth was small, his teeth discolored and irregular, his face and neck blotched with pimples. His pupil, Elaine Hario, was a buxom woman of 35, with sparkling teeth and large blue eyes. When she spoke, dimples played in her cheeks and chin. The fullness of her figure did not dispel her air of childlike innocence.

Elaine came to the Superintendent * with her husband. Norman Kopp, who had been notified, also came with his wife. In fluent though broken English no attempt has been made to reproduce, Elaine told her story:

"When I came into Mr. Kopp's class, I thought he was a high gentleman. In the old country a teacher is a high gentleman. I felt it was a compliment when he sat next to me, to help me. He showed me my mistakes. And when his leg touched my leg, I thought it was an accident.

"He met me in the street after school. He walked with me, and told me many things. Like the spelling of *ocean* and *motion;* and *enough* had a *g* in it because it was like the German *genug.*

* *Superintendent,* used alone with a capital S, refers to the highest officer in that school system, or the one in charge of personnel.

And he said he would like to give me private lessons. I said he could come up to my house, but he said my husband would disturb us and he had a private room. So one night after school I went there with him.

"He showed me how to say *three* and *tree, through* and *true, then* and *den,* and he put his finger in my mouth and on my lips and throat to show me how to sound the words, and he took my finger and put it in his mouth. I asked him to explain the word *den,* and he said: 'You are in my den. I am a lion, a big lion, and you are my little lamb and I would like to eat you.' And then he told me: 'I'm crazy about you. You're the most beautiful woman in the world. I can't live without you.'

"I went to his den many times, but I didn't feel good about it. He has a wife and I have a husband. I told him he has a nice wife, because I saw her once. He said she is *nice* without the *n,* and I was warm and wonderful. But I worried and made up my mind to tell my husband and I did."

"Why do you come to me?" the Superintendent asked her.

"I come because I want you to throw Mr. Kopp out of the schools. He ruined me."

The Superintendent turned to Mr. Kopp, who had seemed shriveled in silence while Mrs. Hario talked. He denied her whole tale of lovemaking. He admitted walking with her after night school, but said he had never given her private lessons.

"He is a liar!" shouted Elaine Hario. "He took me to his den many times, maybe twice a week for six months. He kissed me and hugged me and did everything." Then she turned to Mr. Kopp, and screamed: "How can you sit there and say that! Didn't you tell me I was the most beautiful woman in the world? Didn't you say you couldn't live without me? Didn't you tell me you wanted to divorce your wife and marry me? How can you sit there and lie?"

Her husband interrupted: "Elaine, darling, don't get so excited. I understand. Take it easy, dear; take it easy."

Elaine subsided, but turned to the Superintendent: "Dismiss

him. He shouldn't ruin other innocent women. It's a good thing I didn't get pregnant. And is he stingy!"

"How do you know he is stingy?" the Superintendent interposed.

"Well," Elaine went on, "he has a lot of pimples on his chest and I thought he was sick. So I asked him to give me 10 dollars so I could go to a doctor. He promised to give me the money, but he never did. So I got it from my husband. The doctor told me not to worry, I was all right. So I was glad."

The Superintendent turned again to Mr. Kopp, who could hardly speak, but he sputtered: "I can't understand. This whole thing is a fabrication. It is common practice to sit beside a pupil whose work you are correcting. It was she who pushed her leg against mine. I stopped sitting down next to her. Then she waited for me after school, to walk with me. But I never touched her. I have no den, as she calls it. I never did the things she tells in such great detail. Anyone can see by my face and neck that I have acne. I love my wife and I have never cheated."

Mrs. Kopp then spoke up: "I can't say whether my husband did or did not go with this woman. But he certainly did not lead her astray, or 'ruin' her. This woman is thirty-five and old enough to know what she's doing. Women have affairs but they don't tell the whole world. If she didn't want an affair she wouldn't have gone to this den twice a week for six months. She knew what she was doing and is just as guilty as my husband—if he *is* guilty. And if she didn't know what she was doing, she shouldn't be allowed to run around loose. I think she is dangerous. She sits there now, so angelic, so sweet and innocent, that people believe her. I think she's either a devil or insane."

Mrs. Hario looked at the Superintendent resignedly, silent under these insults. The couples faced one another for a moment. Then the Superintendent said to Mr. Kopp: "I have no alternative but to prefer charges against you."

Mr. Kopp said: "We have two children. I am innocent, but

people will say that where there is smoke there is fire. Will you permit me to resign?"

Mr. Kopp's resignation was accepted.

The Superintendent who was telling the story looked up from his papers and shook his head. Three years later, he said, Mrs. Kopp came into his office. She put a newspaper clipping on his desk; he recognized the picture: Elaine Hario. She had been committed to an institution. But not before she had broken up several families. Mrs. Kopp said, "She accused strangers of making sexual advances on the street. She accused neighbors of obscene gestures and acts. And she wove such details into her stories that people believed her. Finally she kept her neighbors awake all night with weird laughter and obscene shouting. And she was taken away.

"I don't want my husband reinstated," Mrs. Kopp went on. "He's earning more now than he could as a teacher. He's happier than he ever was. He's home nights, and I am happy too. But I do want his name cleared. That woman . . . well, I think this is enough." Her eyes turned toward the clipping from the local paper. "Will you clear his record in your books?"

The Superintendent assured her that the record would be cleared.

The story of Lavinia Randall is still more significant. It illustrates not only the need for sympathetic understanding in the case of a breakdown, but also the problem of determining whether or not that mental collapse is temporary or likely to be recurrent or grow progressively worse. The supervisor's duty, however, is not to make such a determination; that is the task of the psychiatrist. The supervisor must learn to call upon the psychiatrist before the teacher has suffered irreversible deterioration. In the case of Lavinia Randall, this was fortunately done.

Mrs. Randall's principal reported that, after 15 years of successful teaching, she had had two years of increasing disability. She

often stood looking out of the window, sometimes for as much as an hour at a time, while the class was occupied with wasteful "busy-work." She had become remote from her colleagues and resentful of her supervisors. The principal feared that she was suffering deterioration, and requested an examination to determine the state of her mental health.

Mrs. Randall poured forth her story to the psychiatrist:

"I have been married for 17 years and have one child, Gwendolyn, who is 16.

"Before we married, my husband told me that he had a daughter born out of wedlock, who was living with her mother in Haiti. She was then 7 years old.

"During many years of our marriage, my husband showed little interest in this girl, Alicia. But he did speak of our taking a trip some day, to see his parents in Haiti. Gwendolyn and I practiced many little economies, to save for this trip. George finally decided that it would be too great a strain on our resources. Then he began again to talk of Alicia, who was now twenty-one. She had worked as a nurse during a recent epidemic, and he thought it would be wonderful if she could finish her nurse's training in the United States. So he took some of the money we had saved for the trip, bought Alicia a plane ticket, and sent her money for clothes and other expenses.

"For the first few months after her arrival, Alicia seemed shy, and very grateful to us all. She seemed a little more strained with her father. It was some time before she could call him 'Daddy.' He naturally tried to win her affection, and bought her many things. In three months the $1800 we had saved toward our trip was all gone.

"The summer is George's slow season and he had many days off. He began to spend them all with Alicia. He showed her the city. He took her to the beach. In the evenings, they went to the movies or sat in the park. Gwendolyn and I seemed forgotten. Only twice in the whole summer were the four of us out together.

"Conditions did not change in the fall. I finally spoke to George about his apparent lack of interest in Gwendolyn and me. He was highly indignant. From that time he began to order us around, to shout at us when he did not ignore us. His two sisters tried to intervene, but this only made matters worse. To this day he doesn't talk to his sisters because they told him he was treating his wife shamefully.

"In the meantime Alicia too became fresh and rude to us. My husband supported her in every quarrel. Soon he and Alicia began cooking and eating by themselves. My husband stopped giving me any money; I paid all the house bills.

"I finally went to a lawyer. George got a lawyer too, and at a conference both lawyers urged us to try to live again as one family. I prepared the meals again, but George refused to eat anything I cooked. I told Alicia I was preparing dinner for us all. She ignored me and went on cooking for herself and her father."

Mrs. Randall's story continued through many details of the two years. Discovering by accident that her husband had bought a house in Alicia's name, Mrs. Randall exclaimed that she did not see why Alicia should stay and go on tormenting her, when she had a house of her own. Mr. Randall retorted by knocking her down. After the doctor had treated her—she was home from school for two days—Mrs. Randall secured a summons against her husband for assault. He countered, claiming that she had tried to choke him—she remembered having clutched at his shirt as she fell down.

When the judge heard the story, he expressed surprise. He wanted to see Alicia, but she was not in court.

"I can tell you why," said Mrs. Randall bitterly. "She was beginning to bulge with his baby."

The next day, while Mrs. Randall was at school, her husband and his Haitian daughter removed themselves and their belongings from the house. She had no further word from them, except through her lawyer. After the catharsis of confession came the

cleansing of divorce. Lavinia Randall was given a six months' leave of absence, for recovery of health. She is now again an efficient teacher, well liked by the children of her classes.

Knowing that a breakdown may be the result of disturbances at home that, however upsetting, are temporary and removable, a principal naturally hesitates to subject a long-successful teacher to what is still regarded as the stigma of a mental examination. This reluctance, too, may have unfortunate consequences. Let us look at just two of the many cases indicating such ill-advised defense of a seriously afflicted teacher.

It is impossible to say how long the schools of a midwestern city would have continued to harbor Mrs. Mary Lind, had not a neighbor sent a letter of Mrs. Lind's to the Superintendent of Schools. Part of this letter runs:

"My neighbors are killing me, inch by inch. They are too cowardly to do it outright, so they aim to undermine my morale, to wear me down, break my nerves, and little by little watch me die, and the world will not be able to prove that they did it . . . Several weeks ago I could not help but notice two pieces of *red* paper in the back yard. Each day they were in a different part of the yard—even on a night when there was no wind. Then suddenly, both pieces were hung up on the bushes. Naturally, all this had an effect on me, even to know that such a deadly enemy was prowling in my yard. Today, when I came home from school, there was a *red*-handled, worn-out broom perched solidly in a bush. I know who did it, may God curse them!"

There was much more to this effect in the letter. The neighbor's accompanying note declared that everybody in the neighborhood, including the police, knew that Mrs. Lind was queer; why, she inquired, were the school officials so blandly unaware?

When the Superintendent sent for Mrs. Lind, she repeated her rambling fantasies of neighbors' designs upon her. She followed this talk with a long letter listing plots and persecutions. The

principal's report, however, contradicted the implications of these facts. It stated: "Mrs. Lind's results are very satisfactory. Her eighth-year class recently averaged tenth year in reading. All her classes are doing very well. Her work and her personality traits are satisfactory." The school psychiatrist, however, found that Mrs. Lind had suffered delusions of persecution for over 10 years and had reached an aggravated paranoid condition. The Retirement Committee unanimously recommended her retirement.

To the Retirement Board, the final authority, the principal wrote this letter:

"Mrs. Mary Lind is an excellent teacher and is not unfit for service. She is well liked by teachers, pupils, and parents. The results of her teaching compare favorably with those of other teachers. Her discipline is outstanding. She is a hard worker, and keeps up her interest in school activities . . .

"It would be a miscarriage of justice to retire her and we beg you not to retire her."

Mrs. Lind was returned to active service. Three months later her principal wrote again to the Superintendent:

"We made a most serious blunder in asking that Mrs. Lind be retained in the service. She has struck pupils about the head and has called them terrible names. She hurt a fellow teacher so seriously that she has been out of school all week. She has talked to me in a fashion I shall not repeat, and threatened to break my neck. When my assistant entered Mrs. Lind's room, Mrs. Lind called her vulgar names and threw a board eraser at her.

"There has been no teaching here in the past few days, and conditions have so worsened that some teachers and pupils are afraid to come to school. I must have immediate help. By this time you must have heard from my assistant superintendent, who said she would get in touch with you at once. Please do not delay!"

Mrs. Lind was removed from the school, and retired.

Among the various causes of disability, there is one that usually becomes quite evident, that cannot long be hidden: alcoholism. The common device of eating raw onions—substituting one odor for another—wakens rather than dispels suspicion. But in regard to drinking, we are remarkably forbearing.

Called by some "the socially tolerated narcotic," alcohol in beverages is so widely and commonly used that indulgence in them is a normal aspect of our mores, fostered by even more advertising, perhaps, than smoking. The abstainer, the teetotaler, is looked upon as the abnormal, not especially to be invited when merriment is sought. As a consequence, overindulgence is looked upon indulgently. Many a person, himself drinking but moderately, is ready to believe that anyone can break the habit, if only he really tries. Hence the alcoholic teacher, it may be argued, needs only to have pressed home the error of her ways.

Mrs. Alice Godwin had had 25 Satisfactory years of service in the schools. She was head of a department in a western high school and might still be holding her post save for a School Board routine check on excessive absence. She stated that frequent colds had forced her to stay away. The medical examiner smelled onions on her breath. He declared her alcoholic, although she claimed that she had taken no alcohol in months.

To the psychiatrist, Mrs. Godwin admitted that she was "a social drinker." Her husband was a retired newspaper man; he used to drink heavily. He had had a nervous breakdown and was now dependent on her. After a lengthy interview, the psychiatrist concluded:

"I am at a loss to understand how Mrs. Godwin can function efficiently in the school system. If she does, it must be a case of automatic functioning. Her attendance record is atrocious. Since she holds a high pedagogic post, her absences must disrupt the school administration. She is a supervisor; but she is a deteriorated chronic alcoholic and is not fit to supervise anybody, including herself."

The Retirement Committee was informed that Mrs. Godwin had been given numerous warnings. Her history, now investigated, revealed a 10-year train of alcoholic debauches, broken promises, various illnesses aggravated by the alcoholism and the mental weakness of her husband. The Committee unanimously recommended her retirement.

To the Retirement Board, her principal wrote this letter:

"May I at this eleventh hour request you to consider my appeal in behalf of Mrs. Godwin.

"She has solemnly promised me never again to touch a drop of liquor, and I believe that this time she will keep her promise, since she realizes that she never will get another chance. I think she labored under the impression that she could rely upon the support of powerful friends to prevent her retirement. Her mind is now disabused of this idea and she knows that the Board means business.

"I assume full responsibility for her good conduct and I trust that you will find it possible to accede to my request that Mrs. Godwin be permitted to return to active service."

After hearing this letter, the Board debated. Superintendent Brown told the story of a man who had "sunk to the gutter" but whose 7-year-old daughter made him realize the error of his ways and rise from his disgraceful drinking. Superintendent Steward told of the orgiastic career of a man he knew, who after joining Alcoholics Anonymous had become a teetotaler and a model citizen. After much talk of rehabilitation, Mrs. Godwin was permitted to go back to her work.

This was in the middle of June; Mrs. Godwin returned to school in September. Toward the end of that month, she called the Superintendent. He recorded the conversation:

"Mrs. Godwin: I'm on the phone and I want to talk to you. I'm not at school. I have a cold. A bad, bad cold. I'm in bed. Why don't you like me? [She was weeping.]

"Superintendent: When will you return to school?

"Mrs. Godwin: Why don't you come up'n see me some time? I won't bite you. (Laughing) I'm not drunk! No sir, not me!

"Superintendent: What is your telephone number?

"Mrs. Godwin: Wear the tights! (Laughing. Apparently Worthing Heights) 5455454. Did you get it? Wear the tights 54544454."

There was further incoherent babbling before the Superintendent hung up and called Mrs. Godwin's principal. The startled principal said that this was impossible.

Later in the day, the principal telephoned: "I called at Mrs. Godwin's house and found her and her husband in a drunken stupor. The house was in great disorder; glasses and bottles were strewn all over—on beds, tables, and floor. Since it was not possible to engage either of them in conversation, I left. I made a mistake in asking that Mrs. Godwin be given another chance."

A letter repeated the principal's telephoned statement. Mrs. Alice Godwin was retired.

The Superintendent sent each of his colleagues a copy of Karl Menninger's *Man Against Himself,* which contains a chapter on alcoholism. Proper action should be taken before irreparable damage has been done to the unfortunate teacher and incalculable harm to the children entrusted to her care.

THE PATTERN OF THIS BOOK

The mental ailments that afflict teachers are, in substance, the same as press upon the remainder of the population. Differences in their manifestation rise from differences in the nature of their work.

It has already been mentioned that, in a very large number of cases, the teacher's affliction first comes to attention through actions outside the classroom. There is a certain measure of almost automatic, thoroughly habitual conduct, by virtue of which a teacher—or an actor, or other worker—may function with apparently slight loss of efficiency though the internal order be deeply

disturbed. And, unlike the actor's, the teacher's audience is a usually obedient one, trained to accept authority. It is also easier, as previously noted, for colleagues and even supervisors to shrug away from an "eccentric" or troublesome teacher, than to pry or wonder too much at her state.

There are, nevertheless, many ways in which the personality of an afflicted teacher affects the classroom activity, and it seems wise to organize the present consideration along these lines. Manifestly, it would be absurd to suggest that all disciplinary problems are caused by a disturbed teacher. There are some children who will be problems in any class. And there are some days when the best teacher is a bit below top form, and the children misbehave. An office worker may "take it easy" if she has a headache or a broken engagement pressing upon her mind, but a teacher knows that any lapse from full attention may result in disorder in her class.

Every other symptom, as well as failure to maintain discipline, is equally unsatisfactory by itself, in establishing need of psychiatric care. Each must be viewed as part of a pattern. The continuance of unsatisfactory conditions calls for investigation and remedy. Also, a change of pattern in any teacher is significant. If the change is caused by a personality deterioration, a mental disturbance, the psychiatrist will decipher the pattern and identify the difficulty. That identification has been made in the cases discussed in this volume, and the technical findings are given.

The possible teacher failings are presented here, however, not in the technical phraseology of the psychiatrist, nor organized according to the specific disease, but rather as they might impinge upon the children, or become manifest to a supervisor, in the classroom.

No one deviation from the standards of effective teaching is in itself a sign of illness. In every defective condition various patterns of feeling and behavior intermingle. Nevertheless, an at-

tempt will be made to consider separately the major aspects of classroom behavior that may approach pathological proportions, in the hope that it will be clear why they are often tardily reported and why it is crucially important, for the welfare of both teachers and children, that they be recognized promptly and taken in hand.

Psychiatrists and other special students of the mind might appreciate an organization different from that which occurs to an educator. They might, for example, prefer a division of this book's consideration into four major groups, according as the troubled teachers are disturbed in their:

A. Action
B. Emotionality
C. Ideation
D. A mixture of these

The chapters would then be grouped roughly as follows:

A. Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, 14, 19, 20
B. Chapters 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 21
C. Chapters 7, 8, 9
D. Chapters 10, 15, 16, 17, 18

The arrangement followed in the book moves from troubles, or at least symptoms, easier to observe to those more difficult or more complex, in the hope that the reader will discern the logic in the presentation and, in any event, importance in the facts and findings.

SOME TECHNICAL TERMS

Some of the terms psychiatrists apply in their field have as yet received no finally authoritative definition. Some doctors distinguish, for instance, between *neurosis* and *psychoneurosis;* others, like Webster's *New World Dictionary,* make them interchangeable. Some terms have been drawn to a particular significance in

this field; elsewhere, they have another application. Thus, the term *psychosis* in psychology is used to mean any mental state or process; its quite different meanings in psychiatry are indicated below.

Here are a few technical terms, as used in this volume:

mental illness. This is a loose term that covers the disorders—mental, emotional, and moral—that arise when an individual finds it difficult to cope with his surroundings. This is the sense given by Drs. Jack R. Ewalt, Edward A. Strecker, and Franklin C. Ebaugh in their standard text, *Practical Clinical Psychiatry* (8th edition, 1957): "Thus we would come to understand mental illness as being a type of adjustment that an individual makes to certain demands made upon him. The adjustment, unsatisfactory though it may be, is the best possible one under the circumstances. We call it mental illness because the resultant total behavior pattern does not conform to the standards of the time and the situation. For example, a patient in a clinic in dungarees and sans shave would be accepted, but if the author gave a lecture so dressed, you would think he was psychotic. If he came to a picnic in full dress, you would think that odd. If he chaired a panel discussion while drunk, you would say, 'An alcoholic!' but if he delivered a temperance lecture you would think that even more peculiar!

"Thus we are labeled ill, a genius, brilliant, or a fool, depending upon how well our ego can adapt our means of satisfying the basic drives to the demands of our particular culture and time."

The almost casual nature of this description, its attempt to define by examples, indicates the vagueness of the concept of mental illness. In the present book, whether a man struggles but finds it impossible to make a satisfactory adjustment between himself and the actual world around, or gives up the struggle and retreats into a dream world of his own fabrication,

his efforts to get along or to "get away from it all" characterize his mental illness. At first, he may be but mentally disturbed; he is then not so far entangled in, and may still be able to extricate himself from or adjust himself to, the difficulties life presents. The "disturbance" becomes "illness" when the individual is no longer capable of returning to responsive and responsible life in the community through his own efforts, but requires outside therapeutic and psychiatric care.

arteriosclerosis. A thickening and hardening of the walls of the arteries, as may occur in old age. This results in a lessening of the functioning of the afflicted part; thus, cerebral arteriosclerosis slackens and in some measure impedes the processes of the mind.

catatonia. Any of various schizophrenic syndromes (*q.v.*) characterized by phases of stupor, sometimes alternating with phases of excitement and marked muscular rigidity, and often accompanied with abnormal repetition (**stereotypy**) of posture or activity.

cyclothymia. Manic-depressive psychosis in which the fluctuations of mood from high spirits to depression occur at short intervals.

dementia praecox. Literally, precocious madness; so called because it often begins in adolescence; contrasted with **senile dementia.** The term has now been superseded by **schizophrenia.**

facies (three syllables). The expression of the face, as related to and symptomatic of a mental disorder.

hebephrenia. Schizophrenia developing at the beginning of puberty. In older persons, hebephrenic schizophrenia is characterized by giggles, grimaces, absurd and grotesque mannerisms and ideas, and frequent prolonged silliness.

hypomania. The mildest form of mania (see **manic-depressive**), characterized by boastfulness and aggression, by greatly increased and often facetious loquaciousness. Attempts to curb these produce intense irritability. More severe is **acute mania;** most severe, **delirious mania.** These two, involving tendency

to violent acts and disregard for one's own physical needs, call for hospitalization.

involution. Retrograde development; degeneration; the physiological decline preceding and accompanying old age.

manic-depressive. Having a psychosis characterized by alternating periods of mania and melancholia, sometimes with stretches of medium or normal conduct between. **mania.** The manic phase, marked by abnormal excitability, exaggerated feelings of well-being **(euphoria),** flight of ideas, excessive activity, etc. **melancholia.** The mentally depressed phase, marked by extremely low spirits, brooding, and gloominess.

neurosis. Any of various psychic, or mental, disorders characterized by special combinations of anxieties, compulsions, obsessions, phobias, and motor or sensory manifestations, such as tics, without apparent organic or structural injury or change. It results in only partial disorganization of the personality and is less serious in both form and prognosis than a psychosis.

paranoia. A mental disorder, linked with homosexual tendencies, marked by systematized delusions, as of grandeur or, especially, of persecution. One type of schizophrenia has similar symptoms. The paranoid person can often carry on routine activities, and may "get by in the community for years," keeping secret such things as bizarre diaries and devices to detect and ward off (imaginary) enemies and evils. The suspicions, however, may lead to violence against those onto whom the ill person attaches his delusions. Most crimes of the mentally ill are committed by paranoid schizophrenics.

prodrome. A sign of approaching disease; a warning symptom or group of symptoms.

prognosis. Judgment or prediction as to the course and termination of a disease.

psychogenic. Arising in the psyche (the mind): usually referring to nervous, mental, or moral activities, especially disorders.

psychosis. Any mental disorder in which the personality is very

seriously disorganized. Psychoses are of two sorts: (1) *functional,* characterized by lack of apparent organic cause, and principally of a schizophrenic or manic-depressive type, and (2) *organic,* characterized by a pathological organic condition (physical disease) such as general paresis or brain tumor.

schizophrenia. "A regression to primary narcissism." A mental disorder marked by gradual withdrawal from the world around, indifference, lowered efficiency, with delusions of persecution and of omnipotence, and hallucinations; often with unimpaired intelligence. The "unimpaired" and frequently keen intellectual activity, in the fields not involved in the delusions, may give the effect of a "split personality." The ill person may become wholly dependent on himself for emotional satisfaction, wholly absorbed in personal concerns **(autism).** Schizophrenia, the most common of all mental illnesses, may be simple, hebephrenic, catatonic, paranoid, or mixed.

schizothymia. A mild form of schizophrenia.

syndrome. A number of symptoms occurring together, forming a pattern of (mis)behavior or malfunctioning, or characterizing a specific disease.

Sigmund Freud described neuroses and psychoses somewhat differently: "Neurosis is the result of a conflict between the ego and its id, whereas psychosis is the analogous outcome of a similar disturbance in the relation between the ego and its environment (the outer world)." As Dr. H. Peter Laquer graphically expressed it: The neurotic says: "Two times two equals four, and I can't stand it!" The psychotic says: "Two times two equals seventeen; isn't that nice!"

Freud elaborated this idea: "Neurosis does not deny the existence of reality; it merely tries to ignore it. Psychosis denies it and tries to substitute something else for it. A reaction that combines features of both of these is the one that we call normal or healthy; it does not deny reality but it is concerned with effecting a change

in it. This expedient, normal attitude leads naturally to some achievement in the outer world."

On these basic terms not only psychiatrists continue to disagree. Each manifestation, each personality, must be considered in its own pattern, its own environment, its own lights.

A very few terms in the field of education may also require elucidation, and are discussed below:

Board of Education or School Board. This is a body of lay citizens, usually appointed by a mayor. It may meet once a month and the members receive no salary. It is entrusted with policy-making for the city's school system, and decides on construction of new schools. Major actions of the Board of Superintendents, including assignments of teachers, are presented for its approval. NOTE that often, when one refers to "the Board," one means the main office of the educational system rather than the specific body of lay citizens.

Board of Examiners. A graduate of a recognized teacher-training school may receive a license to teach on application to the State department of education. Before any assignment, there may be an interview with the local superintendent or principal.

In city school systems, the applicant may be required to take a written, an oral, and a physical examination. The oral examination, which includes a consideration of the applicant's personality, will be before one or more members of a Board of Examiners. This Board consists of experienced teachers and supervisors who have passed examinations for the post. In not one of the school systems studied is there a psychiatrist or a psychologist on the examining board!

Board of Superintendents. A Commissioner of Education, or Supervisor or Superintendent of Public Instruction, is the major executive officer in the field, in each state. Cities usually also have a Superintendent of Schools, appointed by the Board of Education. They may also have a Deputy Superintendent, Associates, and

Assistants in charge of divisions of the work or of school districts. One superintendent, in large cities, may be in charge of personnel.

The Superintendent and his associates may meet regularly as the Board of Superintendents. They are responsible for the carrying out of the school policies and for the efficient functioning of the schools.

Retirement Board. The mandatory retirement age for teachers is usually 65 or 70. A teacher may usually retire, preserving pension rights, within 5 years of the mandatory age, or after 35 years of service. Earlier retirement, with pension rights, is permitted on the ground of disability. A teacher may, of course, resign voluntarily at any time.

For physical or mental disability, or for various specified actions harmful to the schools or to the children, action may be taken to effect a teacher's enforced retirement. In such cases, there may be a hearing before the local supervisor.

In larger communities, a Retirement Committee may be appointed for each case (or for the year); it will include the personnel chief, the superintendent in charge of the teacher's division —elementary, junior high, senior high—and a physician. Several school systems inform the author that no question has been raised as to legal representation for the teacher, but some permit the teacher to have a colleague as an advisor and to submit medical or psychiatric testimony.

The Retirement Committee may recommend further action to the final authority, the city's Retirement Board. This is not an education department group, but represents all aspects of the city's activities. Its members usually include the city comptroller, the actuary, representatives of large city departments, and lay citizens appointed by the mayor. Thus, the immediate problem of the individual teacher is viewed against the background of the manifold concerns of the city.

Because of these successive steps, retirement is not a simple

or a swift process, though a teacher who seems seriously ill or otherwise urgently unfit can be suspended or removed from the classroom while action is pending. During the process of investigation, from the supervisors closest to the teacher to those with the final choice, every effort is made to give the teacher sympathetic understanding and helpful consideration. It is safe to say—as will be seen in the body of this book—that most of those ultimately withdrawn by the Retirement Board from teaching, as mentally disturbed, were allowed to stay in the classroom too long.

School systems, both city and state, are so organized that every aspect of educational activity is given due weight. There is a special division to survey population shifts and plan new building. Another division examines the theories of the educational philosophers, to shape the new conceptions of teaching, of the interrelation of teacher, child, subject, teaching devices, and community, into practical methods of instruction, and to pass these ideas and methods along to the teaching staff.

The teacher, at the core of the process, in direct contact with the children, is carefully selected, supervised, and aided, and—if necessary—with sympathy and caution but with first regard for the well-being of the children, retired from the work. Unfortunately, as this book indicates, the caution is at times excessive or misplaced. In a field thoroughly covered in most of its aspects, the problem of the mentally disturbed teacher is approached with special ignorance.

1

Inability to Control the Class

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL in teaching is that the teacher control the class. Educational texts present many ways of securing and maintaining proper discipline or, better, of inducing self-discipline.

No beginner can succeed as a teacher without achieving a personal balance that includes power to maintain proper class discipline. It is when a thitherto successful teacher loses this balance, and becomes unable to control her class, that deep-seated trouble may be suspected.

Miss Helen Cheney, after 22 years of Satisfactory teaching, received three successive ratings of Unsatisfactory before the School Board made inquiry. She was then 60 years old.

The principal reported that children walked out of her classroom; when they were escorted back, Miss Cheney had not known that they had left. She had little control over her pupils, who on the whole made no active disturbance but talked to one another incessantly and did the assigned work or not as they pleased. Miss Cheney seemed completely unaware of her general failure to control the class. She complained of five or six "unmanageable boys" whom she had to put up with for the entire year. Two of these boys had since moved away; one "straightened out" and ceased to be a problem; two others proved to be just as troublesome in a special class.

The principal stated that, even with several children removed from the room, the problem in Miss Cheney's class continued. He declared that in talks with Miss Cheney he could detect no

evidence of hearing deficiency, but she seemed deaf to the constant hubbub in her classroom.

Miss Cheney told the psychiatrist that the Unsatisfactory ratings weighed upon her; they impaired her efficiency as a teacher and her pleasure in her social hours. She wrote a long letter to her principal, protesting that her work was excellent:

"It is an easy matter to recall your ill-advised rating and that quickly. Such actions will also save a great deal of trouble for other people who should not have been bothered at all. I therefore hope that you will take steps on your own initiative to recall this wholly undeserved disgrace. Such a rating can only harm yourself more than it harms me, great and killing as that is. There is not anyone in the system who cannot bring pressure to bear, to cause trouble and embarrassment to all around him. Kindly go about the removal of this contemptible rating."

When the rating was not changed, Miss Cheney wrote her principal a 25-page letter saying, among other things: "Either you are not yet relieved but still suffering sleepless nights—your mind not at ease but disturbed by all kinds of doubt, with embarrassment, with chagrin, with a sense of deep injustice at the thought of this attempted liquidation.

"Or you may be rubbing your hands together, rolling your eyes in unction, thinking—'Well, this is a trifle unpleasant for the moment, but on the third round I can dust off my hands and say "That's that!" and come to peaceful slumber at last.'

"Examine your state to find which is your condition. If the latter, your demise, as that of your intended victim, cannot be far off."

At the end of her psychiatric interview, Miss Cheney asked the doctor's opinion of her. He reported: "I told her that I regard her as not disabled by any mental disorder. I added that it is not uncommon to find teachers who are unaware of gradually reduced efficiency due to 'imperceptible' mental changes."

At 10 A.M. on Sunday, Miss Cheney 'phoned the psychiatrist,

to itemize what she wanted him to say in his report. Her words were so rambling and so repetitive that he asked her to come for another interview. His final report stated: "This teacher is detached from reality and lacks insight into her condition. This may be a case of schizophrenia. It is possible that she was never fit to teach." "Fitness to teach," in regard to mental health, is nowhere regularly tested before an applicant is accepted; it is, like innocence, assumed until the contrary is established.

Miss Helen Cheney was retired. She continued to write lengthy letters, some of them 80 pages long, full of accusations against her principal and the doctors. "I am disgraced," she cried, "at the end of a lifetime of proud service!"

The conflicting claims of fairness to a teacher and justice to the children often seem hard to reconcile. The processes of removal or retirement take time; and only when a grave emergency arises is the teacher withdrawn at once and given clerical work, or allowed to knit, in the principal's or the superintendent's office, while the wheels of removal grind. How may one be sure, also, that the lapse in control is not just temporary? An essentially good teacher may be pressed by personal problems, wholly unrelated to mental disease. For these and other reasons (indicated as this book proceeds), several years may go by while conditions deteriorate and finally become intolerable.

Thus Miss Monica Hunt, aged 49, had been teaching Satisfactorily for 22 years. Then, after three successive ratings of Unsatisfactory, she was transferred to another school. The assistant superintendent reported that, under his guidance, the new principal and his assistant were most sympathetic, and tried in every way to help Miss Hunt. To encourage her, at the end of her first term in his school, the principal marked her Satisfactory. The next term, however—after 2½ years of unsatisfactory classroom service had gone by—he felt obliged to send the School Board a report.

"1. *Discipline.* Miss Hunt's main difficulty is discipline. She has poor control of her class and seems to lack knowledge of the simplest elements of classroom management. For instance, in the second month of the term she still called on the children by saying, 'You, there!' or 'That boy!,' seemingly never knowing, until we explained it to her, that with a seating plan she could call the children by name from the first day.

"She would talk to one or two children for several minutes, neglecting the rest of the class. Naturally, the other children grew disorderly, but she continued her private talk regardless.

"Though Miss Hunt's class, 3A, had been called by its previous teacher 'splendid, bright, adorable'; though all the other teachers of the grade had begged for that class before it was assigned; though the supervisors had always found the children in this class interested in their work, busy, happy, and orderly; nevertheless, since Miss Hunt has had the class we have found the children in constant disorder, confusion, commotion, not busy with useful work, not interested at all—in fact bored and restless. Her reprimands and scoldings are too frequent, and the loud talking, almost yelling and shrieking, can be heard in the corridors.

"2. *Teaching.* Her actual teaching is mediocre. Her planning is not thorough, detailed, or careful. Her lessons usually begin without any aim, with no motivation whatever, without even the attention of the class. During the lesson, few children participate, the teacher doing most of the talking. It ends with no summing up, with nothing definite accomplished. Many errors on the blackboard and on the children's papers are left unmarked—I know not whether from poor sight, laziness, inertia, or carelessness.

"3. *Health.* She is very much overweight. For some time, the other teachers of the grade have taken her class to the gymnasium and cared for the children there. After seeing a demonstration of the 'home escort fire drill' in a neighboring school, I wondered how Miss Hunt could be of any use in an emergency.

"4. *Personality.* She is very untidy, really sloppy and slovenly, in appearance. Her clothes often look soiled, sometimes are torn. Her general appearance gives children and parents a decidedly bad impression, contrasting with the splendid appearance of the rest of the school. There seems to be about her almost an 'odor of the unwashed'; it is really unpleasant to be close to her. When I spoke to her about her clothes and her appearance, she replied: 'I am a teacher, not a model.'

"A number of parents have asked us to see that their children do not have the same teacher next term."

The psychiatrist reported that Miss Hunt was sluggish in thought and action. He concluded that she "is suffering from a senile psychosis, which is a weakening of the mind resulting from degenerative changes in the brain. It is progressive. Since there is no hope of improvement to any marked degree, the teacher should be retired."

Miss Monica Hunt was retired. It is clear, even from the little of their records here reproduced, that the inability of Miss Cheney and Miss Hunt to control their classes was due to deeper disturbances in their personalities.

Inability to control a class is not an isolated feature of a teacher's work, but a sign of other deficiencies. There may be inadequate organization of the subject matter, so that the lesson stirs its topics around and around like leaves in a teacup, without any movement toward a goal. Or the lesson may not be well motivated, so that the class feels no valid purpose, no reason for doing the work. Or it may not be adapted to the intelligence of the children, with something to lure the dull and to challenge the bright. The "eager-beaver" teacher may talk most of the time, or otherwise do all the work, while the children grow increasingly bored and restless. There may, on the other hand, be qualities in the teacher of harshness or timidity or plain indifference. The children sense these and respond with rebellion and disorder.

There are many other possible causes of poor discipline, in addition to mental affliction. Beneath the lack of control, the supervisor must discern the deeper troubles.

Mrs. Elvira Loomis, aged 44, had 21 years of Satisfactory teaching in New England before her work seemed to go to pieces. She told the principal she could not understand what was happening. He noted that she talked constantly to her 4A children, hovering over them as though afraid they might get away from her. They were soon aware of this and were quick to take advantage. The teacher next door constantly came in to restore order, but as soon as she left, pandemonium rose again.

The psychiatrist detailed episodes indicating mental deterioration, concluding: "Her present mental state did not develop overnight but is of long standing. There is likelihood, not of improvement, but of greater deterioration."

Before the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Loomis replied to various questions, stating that the distance between England and Germany is 20,000 miles; between the United States and Russia, 150,000 miles; between the United States and Japan, 400,000. She said she had read no books in a long time, did not listen to the radio, and read no newspaper: "I am too busy learning the Activity Program." Asked to solve the problem: *If 3 oranges cost 18 cents, what is the cost of 18 oranges?,* she requested a sheet of paper, spent nearly 10 minutes figuring, then announced: "54 cents."

Before the Retirement Board, Mrs. Loomis complained that the Committee had asked her foolish questions. "If I have to know distances, I can always find out. They asked me how far it is to the moon. I don't have to know that; I don't teach it and nobody knows it anyway. They asked silly questions, so I gave them silly answers." The Retirement Board voted that Mrs. Loomis be not retired.

Interviewed again by the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Loomis modified some of her answers. She had had a letter from a brother

in Japan, she said, so she knew it was 70,000 miles away. Brazil was in the unit she was teaching that term; she thought it was in South America, but did not know its capital. Given a globe, she found Brazil, but could not locate Venezuela. This teacher of young children said "pitcher" for "picture," "yeller" for "yellow," "verse" for "voice."

The Medical Board then examined Mrs. Loomis, reporting: "Her mental slowness, her speech defects, her tremor, her nystagmus and her almost expressionless facies are indicative of definite pathology of a neurological nature (either multiple sclerosis or an incipient encephalitis) and she is not in a condition to teach."

Mrs. Elvira Loomis was retired.

Long years of Satisfactory rating are not an accurate indication either of a teacher's abilities or of the quality of her service. Unsatisfactory rating may produce various dire results, such as transfer to another school, failure to receive a salary increase, even loss of job. A teacher, therefore, will naturally fight vigorously against a U rating, and the supervisor must be ready to take time and trouble to justify it clearly. As a consequence—to encourage improvement, to spare the teacher harm, or to avoid trouble—many a borderline case is continuously rated Satisfactory. When a superintendent looks at the ratings of a teacher term after term, he finds no official distinction, no line of demarcation, among the best teacher in the school, the shiftless one who knows how to keep the class in order and to "put on a show" when the supervisor appears, and the earnest, hard-working, worried teacher who is only efficient enough to win a headshake and a hesitant rating above the border.

Miss Lena Yager, after 31 years of Satisfactory teaching in the Middle West, at the age of 52 was hospitalized for involutional melancholia. A psychiatric examination was ordered before her return to service and the school psychiatrist made a report. His words are reproduced here in some detail, as an example of the

conscientious care and sympathetic thoroughness of such an examination:

"Miss Yager was punctual, and thoroughly co-operative throughout the interview. She was well oriented, rational, and there was no evidence of delusions, hallucinations, or pathological emotionality. She seemed somewhat discursive in some of her replies to questions and her replies were not always exactly to the point, but this did not seem to be sufficiently marked to be regarded as outside the range of normality, and to a large extent seemed attributable to Miss Yager's worries about her financial security for the future. These worries on her part have a realistic basis and it seems fair to expect a reduction of evidence of strain on this score if she is reassured by reassignment to her teaching, for which she feels ready and which she claims has been advised by her psychiatrist, with whom she continues to keep in touch every few months. She last saw him two months before this interview with me. Another observation was that of a certain general slowness and measured quality in speech, movement, and thought, again not of an extreme degree but sufficient to be noticeable under the close scrutiny of my examination. In evaluating this I am limited by not knowing Miss Yager's manner prior to her illness and having no basis for comparison, since this may be her typical, lifelong characteristic tempo. The impression may have been heightened as well by the measured quality of her speech which may have been partly due to the accommodation to new dentures, which would be a transient matter.

"Miss Yager appears as a very conscientious, somewhat timid and conforming individual whose intellectual endowment seems average rather than outstanding, and whose demands on life are relatively unassuming and limited in scope. Therefore the security rising from familiar and smoothly running conditions in her work and home is all the more important to her. On the whole she showed a wholesome attitude, free from false shame,

about having been mentally sick, and she is most desirous of resuming her work at Blaine High School. She thinks a transfer would actually create more of a reflection on her, since it might convey an unrealistic implication of mental illness as some mysterious stigma that should be totally hidden. In terms of the familiarity of the work and the surroundings, as well as the convenience of closeness to her home, which she owns, Miss Yager vastly prefers reassignment to Blaine High School where she taught. Since the teacher's capacity to resume work would from the psychiatric standpoint be strengthened by anything that increases her sense of security and freedom from undue strain, reassignment at Blaine High School seems the best plan. Naturally, I am not in a position to evaluate the educational and administrative factors that may be involved.

"In summary, Miss Yager seems to have recovered from involutional melancholia. This form of psychosis is indeed one from which the recovery rate is high. I see no contraindication to her resuming her teaching, from the psychiatric standpoint. The observation I have noted regarding possible general slowness might affect her work, but this would have to be determined by her actual capacity to perform her work satisfactorily, rather than evaluated psychiatrically. Her attitude toward her illness and her readiness to keep in touch with her psychiatrist provide additional safeguards against the possibility of recurrence and its adverse consequences in the classroom. Miss Yager does not appear potentially dangerous to others."

Miss Yager was restored to service in Blaine High School that fall, and the principal was asked to watch over her. In November, he sent extracts of "voluminous material" to the School Board, showing her complete inability to control her classes:

"October 23. As the late bell rang, there were four students standing at the windows, watching something in the street. Most of the class were talking in loud tones. One pupil stood sharpening his pencil. Finally the teacher cried: 'Notebooks out! No one

at pencil-sharpener after the bell has rung! That means you, Miss Dean. Don't show off, and make your conduct as bad as you can because Mr. Black is in the room. Face front! I am not on trial! I could have sent you to Mr. Black long ago; that is the routine for such conduct. Clear your desk! Sit properly! Books on bench! This is a short period today on account of option cards. Don't drum on desks!' The teacher continued to harangue and scold the children. Finally there was silence. The teacher then said: 'Now that you have the proper attitude you get the proper instruction. I am sure when I send you to Mr. Black he will know why. Miss Ryan, face front! Miss Orr, change seats with Miss Kay!' As the pupils moved to obey, she called: 'Hurry up, Miss Orr! You are getting the attention you wanted.' Eleven minutes of the period had gone by.

"*October 31.* Note accompanying girl to office: 'Mr. Black: Please keep Elen Sachez out of my room until her mother comes. Prolonged case of deliberate disorder.' Statement of Elen Sachez: 'Miss Yager was talking. I have a cold, and I coughed. She said I was disorderly and should have stayed home. Later on the girl next me asked for a tissue and I gave it to her. Miss Yager said I was interrupting her class, and ordered me out of the room. She says we are all savages; but she does such strange things in the class. She isn't in her right mind.'

"*October 31.* Complaint of teacher, Mr. Brinker: 'You'll have to do something about Miss Yager. Yesterday (and several other days) she sat in Room 16A while I had some service girls working on the Cafeteria books. They talked in normal conversational tones about their work, but Miss Yager said they were disturbing her; she became abusive, and insisted they leave the room.'

"*October 31.* Statement by pupil, Jane Yuley: 'Miss Yager came in and shouted for attention. I dropped my knitting bag and wool spilled out. I picked it up and she told me to go to Mr. Black's office. Miss Yager doesn't teach us anything new. If you ask a question she says you are looking for attention and you just want to make her work, so you go without an answer.

One day when I asked a question she called me a ringleader and a beast. She keeps threatening the pupils that she is going to send us to court or that she is going to have a policeman in the room to see that no harm comes to her. I know these things sound untrue, but you can ask and the whole class will tell you just what I have written.'

"*November 1.* Mrs. Holt came to school today, to insist that her daughter Louise be taken from Miss Yager's class, as Miss Yager was making the girl a nervous wreck. Louise Holt's statement said, among other things: 'I was not sure where to place a column of words. I raised my hand to ask where it belonged. Miss Yager got angry and called me a ringleader of the bad girls in the class. When someone leans down to get a book, if Miss Yager is standing near, she says the girl is trying to trip her. The other day one of the girls raised her hand to ask a question. Miss Yager turned around and bumped into the hand. She cried out that the girl was trying to beat her, and that if this happened again she would call a policeman. Yesterday in the hall I heard a lot of boys and girls shouting and laughing. I looked and saw they were following Miss Yager down the hall. They were doing this because she was walking down the hall balancing a box of papers on her head . . .' "

Twenty pages of such items went with Miss Yager to the psychiatrist. Miss Yager felt that "It is high time this persecution stops . . . A transfer to another school would ruin my reputation . . . I think they want to prevent six other teachers from leaving by stacking the cards against me."

Miss Yager's family history was not a happy one. Her parents had been separated for 20 years. She had three sisters and four brothers; one of the latter, an alcoholic, had committed suicide by gas the year before. Her father, also an alcoholic, died a few months before Miss Yager's mental breakdown, from which she had returned to teaching. Her principal reported to the Retirement Board:

"Miss Yager has been a problem *ever since she has been at*

Blaine High School. She never really got on well with pupils, teachers, parents, clerks, supervisors. She has always been a disagreeable person; one didn't want to have to deal with her. She always had a chip on her shoulder and a sharp tongue. I rated her Satisfactory, because I felt I would have a hard time substantiating an Unsatisfactory rating; her teaching was not good; neither was it so bad at all times that I could in good conscience rate her down. Nor could I say that she was a mental case—I am not a psychiatrist—but we all thought that she was peculiar. But now parents, pupils, and teachers say openly that Miss Yager is 'crazy,' and many of them say that they are sorry for her. Perhaps I should have reported her sooner, before she caused so much trouble in the school. I think it would be kind to retire her rather than bring her up on charges of Unsatisfactory service."

The psychiatrist diagnosed "chronic mental illness of psychotic proportion . . . a paranoid condition."

Miss Lena Yager was retired.

The teacher's inability to control the class opens the door to multiple evils. The child's natural energy, not absorbed in valid work, seeks other outlets. Unsocial tendencies, which good teaching properly redirects, come into play. The bully, the sneak, the mischief-maker, begin to exercise their whims. The sadist finds scope for his teasing or his torture. (Many children delight in inflicting pain; it gives them a sense of power. Some never outgrow this need.) The timid feel free to break their bonds. The weak hasten to join, lest their backwardness be exposed. Even those whose impulses lead them toward order are drawn in, lest they be called "chicken" and lose face in the group, or just to defend themselves against the wilder children. (Tug the hair of even the best-mannered girl, and she'll swing around with a cry or a blow.) Currents and countercurrents of emotion are set up that leave marks on the character of a child long after a new teacher has restored order in the classroom.

2

Corporal Punishment

IT IS NOT THE PURPOSE of this volume to argue educational theory or moral principle. Certainly corporal punishment is frowned upon by all "advanced" educators. Just as the newest parents, however, are returning to some of the older, more prescriptive, ideas of child training, so some of the still more "advanced" educators are wondering whether there may not be a certain value in the physical jolt.

Some groups, including churchmen, have never abandoned belief in the Bible precept: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." Thus the widely influential Bishop Fulton J. Sheen quotes with approval the words of a former headmaster of Phillips Andover Academy: "I was whipped as a child, thank goodness! But time and again I had to throw boys out of the school, when all they needed was a good spanking." The Bishop emphasizes his point: "Spanking is one of the most easily understood lessons in the world . . . It is quick, clean-cut, clears the air, allows no long periods of disfavor, and helps the parent by preventing an accumulation of emotional worries." Perhaps, as the Bishop's final words suggest, it helps the parent (as the parent often says it hurts him!) more than it does the child.

The parent is still permitted corporal punishment, even though it is forbidden in the classroom. Often, however, parents do not, or dare not, lay a hand upon the child—perhaps not so much for fear of physical reprisal as for dread of threats of even more serious misbehavior. "If you lay a hand on me," shrieked one

recalcitrant girl, as the juvenile court later heard the story, "I'll lay for every boy on the block!" Where parents dare not, and teachers may not, chastise a refractory child, other more intelligent methods of securing good behavior must be sought. Not everyone can apply them.

If the social or moral arguments for and against corporal punishment are disregarded, two facts remain: in the first place, for a teacher, use of corporal punishment is illegal; in the second and by no means subsidiary place, it is, nevertheless, often employed in the schoolroom. And when a teacher does resort to corporal punishment, it is almost always a sign of inability to control a class, if not a symptom of a deeper deficiency. In the stories that follow, use of corporal punishment was one betrayal of a basic disorder.

Miss Beatrice Sandman, aged 30, had been teaching 2½ years; she was being considered for her permanent license. Her principal, to whose school she had been transferred the year before, requested that she now be transferred from his school.

"All the teachers scream at the children!" Miss Sandman exclaimed when it was suggested that she talk more quietly. Parents came to complain that she had slapped their son, or pulled their daughter's hair. Instead of denying these charges, Miss Sandman said she struck the children because it was impossible to control them any other way. "That's how they expect to be handled. That's what they get at home. That's what they're trained to obey . . . The other teachers do it, too; it's just my hard luck to be checked on." She complained that, when a disobedient child was sent to the supervisor, he came back even more defiant, saying: "I don't care if you send me to him; he's my friend; he gives me chewing gum!"

Miss Sandman's family history revealed an underprivileged and disturbed childhood. She told the psychiatrist that she was supporting a father of 80, a mother who suffered from grave malnutrition, a brother who had recently undergone an opera-

tion for detached retina, and another brother with a long record of hospitalizations for schizophrenia. This brother seemed somewhat calmer now, but in the past Miss Sandman had had to intervene when he was attacking their parents.

Miss Sandman's new principal declared: "It is my considered opinion that Miss Sandman will not be happy in teaching. She is unstable and emotional. She is herself in need of guidance and wise counsel. If she continues to teach she will be unhappy and will make the children she teaches unhappy . . . She and her family have made great sacrifices so that she might become a teacher and it is not easy for them to face the fact that all their efforts were in vain. Then, too, her family background is not of the kind from which we ought to recruit teachers. I do not refer to the poverty but rather to the mental milieu in which she was brought up."

Miss Sandman varied her disciplinary technique between blows and silence. At 2:15 one day, the visiting assistant principal suggested that she go on to the next lesson. "I won't teach any lesson!" she exclaimed. "Some days they are like this. They just won't learn anything. They'll just have to sit still until 3 o'clock." On another occasion, the assistant found Miss Sandman in the rear of the room, while a strange man was lecturing the class. She said that he was her brother, and that she felt it would improve discipline to have a man talk to the class.

The psychiatrist reported: "Psychoneurosis chronic, mixed type, with some anxiety trends and emotional instability in a person with a schizoid personality structure. A diagnosis of schizophrenia cannot be made, nor does this examiner consider that the teacher is psychotic. It is probable she will not be able to teach in a difficult school such as the present one that she describes. This teacher has a fondness for teaching the homebound. It is probable she could manage such a situation quite well, or perhaps teach in a less difficult school."

Before the term ended, Miss Sandman reported a "nervous

breakdown" and resigned from the school system. The removal of an unfit teacher, unfortunately, is seldom this easy.

The most frequent forms of classroom corporal punishment—a slap in the face, a box or pinch of the ear, a tug at the hair—seem, in spite of laws and regulations, to be fairly widespread elementary school practices. Many teachers find them (like the Bishop's spankings!) emotionally comforting—and unreported. At least, if the child does complain at home, the parent often deems the punishment deserved or not important enough to warrant indignant protests to the principal. Almost always, when some more violent act does occur, investigation uncovers a long train of such seemingly minor incidents. They are significant symptoms, which should not have been ignored.

Occasionally there are sudden and, for that teacher, unprecedented outbursts of violence. Such sudden fits of temper and acts of violence may be produced by an unusually severe emotional strain or personal burden. They may also be signs of a more lasting and basic deterioration.

Miss Ruth Hoff, aged 56, had received a Satisfactory rating for 28 years. She was a teacher of art in a western high school, unhappy after transfer to a smaller school where she could not be given a full teaching program in her own subject. She came to the School Board's attention through a fracas in her classroom.

According to the principal's report, a boy stopped outside Miss Hoff's classroom to speak to three boys she had sent out of her class. Seeing him through the glass door, Miss Hoff went out and kicked him in the shin. He stood there, startled; she kicked him again and went back into the room. The boy followed her, yelling, "You kicked me in the shin!" An argument ensued; she threatened to take him to the Dean; he insisted that she do so in order that he might report her for kicking him. Miss Hoff claimed that, in the classroom, the boy struck her and exclaimed:

"They murder teachers for less!" (Not long before, a junior high school boy had killed his teacher with a home-made gun.)

Jane Fels, another pupil, said that she was standing in the hall nearby. Miss Hoff saw the girl outside, went out and kicked her, and ordered her away. Jane followed Miss Hoff into the classroom, shouting that the teacher had no right to kick her. The girl admits having lost control of herself and having used vile language to Miss Hoff.

At this point another teacher, Mr. Case, came into the room, where the class tension was mounting. He broke up what he termed an undignified and coarse quarrel. The period had ended; Mr. Case sent the protesting boy to his next class. The others lingered, and in loud tones Miss Hoff repeated before Mr. Case's incoming class the vile language Jane Fels had used.

The psychiatrist, supplied with other instances of Miss Hoff's treatment of pupils, stated after his examination that she "has not been stable for more than 2 years." The Retirement Committee, after a 2-hour interview of Miss Hoff, concluded:

"1. Miss Hoff is a disagreeable person. Her manner is antagonistic and it is not surprising that her pupils resent her.

"2. She has no insight and does not recognize the baneful influence she exercises upon her pupils.

"3. She is unkind and her pupils know it. Some of them hate her.

"4. She has alibis for everything. These satisfy her ego but prevent her from seeing things as they are.

"5. Her brothers, though aware of her shortcomings, are doing all they can to keep her in her job. (One brother tried to bribe an official and was reprimanded in the presence of the Retirement Committee.)"

After the Committee interview, Miss Hoff was given further examination and psychological tests, which revealed "a personality disorder, possibly caused by a pre-senile psychosis, based

on organic changes, which definitely interferes, periodically, with her capacity to function in an organized and socially acceptable manner . . . She is most likely to experience future attacks with greater frequency and duration, during which she will most likely exhibit gross psychotic symptoms."

Miss Ruth Hoff was retired.

One of her former colleagues, who had deep sympathy for her, later said to the superintendent: "Miss Hoff is a truly unfortunate woman. She wanted to be admired, but her face discouraged male attention. No man ever looked at her twice. She tried ever so hard to be a good teacher. But as pupils and teachers remained indifferent, she grew resentful and bitter. She is the only failure in a brilliantly successful family. One day she said to me: 'I have lived too long.' "

At times, in the face of many complaints of corporal punishment, teachers will reiterate an insistent denial and express wonder that their word should be doubted because of the statements of "a pack of rowdy kids" out to "get" their teacher.

Some teachers, whose "theory of education" still includes the notion that a spanking is more effective than a smile, seek to avoid personal complication by transferring their authority to a monitor. Occasionally by direct order, more frequently with implicit direction and encouragement and convenient blindness, the teacher has the student impose order by physical force. This may allow the teacher to escape official blame, but its effect upon the personalities of both the boss monitor and his victims is hardly a proper end of education. And while this may be a makeshift device of a weak or cowardly teacher, it, too, may cover more corrosive failings deep within.

Miss Rosalie Mahon, aged 46, teaching in Massachusetts, had been rated Satisfactory for 17 years when the assistant superintendent filed a derogatory report.

Dropping in at the elementary school on a routine visit, he

found the principal discussing with Mr. and Mrs. Miller their son's protest that he had been badly beaten by Miss Mahon's monitor, at her order. The superintendent said he would look into the matter; the parents thanked him and left. Miss Mahon was sent for; when she saw the superintendent she exclaimed: "Oh! They told me the next step would be to say parents were complaining about me!" She would not elucidate, but would not believe that the superintendent's visit at this time was purely a coincidence. When questioned about the Miller boy, she denied having struck him, or any boy. The superintendent mentioned that the principal had told him that Miss Mahon had, in his presence, said to Mrs. Miller: "Yes, I told the monitor to hit him, and I'd do it again!" Thereupon she laughed excitedly, and exclaimed: "I *would* be crazy, if I said that!" Throughout the interview, the superintendent reported, Miss Mahon's manner was excited, her laughter derisive, and her statements often contradictory.

The principal reported that this was by no means the first charge of corporal punishment, usually described as meted out by a monitor on Miss Mahon's orders. He had spoken to her of these charges several times, but the practice continued. "This is a good neighborhood, and the Parents' Association will not tolerate her continued service in this school. I do not blame the parents, for Miss Mahon has not been fit to teach for a long time. Do not transfer her to another school; you will simply transfer the problem."

The psychiatrist found that Miss Mahon "has a definite paranoid trend, impairment of judgment; has gradually grown more suspicious and believes herself to be the victim of malevolent intentions. Her reasoning is subtle and plausible and might well be believed by some if she started litigation . . . It is apparent that Miss Mahon remains the problem she was when her first transfer was requested."

Four principals in whose schools Miss Mahon had served em-

phasized the same point to the Retirement Board. One told of a mother who complained her son had had his ear pulled so hard she had to apply a poultice. Another told of a teacher who, as a welcoming gift when Miss Mahon first came to the school, had sent her a potted plant. The pot had a slight, virtually unnoticeable crack. Miss Mahon stalked into the teacher's room and before her class shouted: "Take back your pot! You think I don't know what you mean when you send me a cracked pot! So I'm a crackpot, eh? Who brought that tale to you? If you ever do anything like that again, I'll crack your pate!" Whereupon she thumped the pot down on the teacher's desk so hard that it broke. Miss Mahon turned to the children, grinned, said, "Put that in your pipe and smoke it!," then strutted out of the room, laughing.

The next principal said: "Miss Mahon is the most irritating person I have ever had the displeasure of knowing. Whether she is sick or not—I am no psychiatrist—she is unfit to teach. If you leave her in school, I can promise you plenty of lawsuits. She is too free with her hands. She's a bully, and the children and parents will not take the bullying."

All these complaining principals, it should be noted, had always given Miss Mahon a rating of Satisfactory.

Miss Mahon, who was accompanied at the Retirement Committee interview by a teacher advisor, began a counterattack: "I am not crazy. It's Principal Palmer. Ask her teachers; what do they say about her? 'Queer.' 'Touched.' 'Loose in the upper story.' They are all well-known martinets and tyrants, especially Superintendent Bronson. I am being crucified by their lies." She laughed long and loud. "They will deny this conspiracy, but you can see them all here, eager for their prey. Wily old Bronson is the impresario; you think you hear four voices, but you really hear one and the same voice, Judas the traitor, grand inquisitor wily Bronson. He won't be satisfied until he sees me dead. But somewhere, some day, justice will be done. I don't expect it here."

At that point, the teacher advisor interposed: "Ladies and Gentlemen, will you permit me to withdraw Miss Mahon to counsel her? I should like to submit a brief in her behalf."

Miss Rosalie Mahon was retired. Miss Mahon's disturbed personality made itself manifest at these final interviews. Throughout her 17-year record of corporal punishment, however, no one seems to have considered that a psychiatric examination might have helped her and relieved the children.

Stories of flagellants, and the technical terms "sadist" and "masochist," call our attention to the relation between bodily pain, or physical violence, and sex. There may be but a tenuous link between this and the infliction of corporal punishment in the classroom. At the same time, there are teachers whose lives have been sexually frustrate, who seem to delight in, or at least to indulge in, frequent infliction of petty physical pain.

Miss Alice Ettling, aged 45, had substituted for 6 years in many schools, and was now in her second year as a regular teacher of hygiene. She seemed to enjoy the work, but entered upon no cordial relationships with her fellow teachers. In the teachers' room one day, Mrs. Andrews inadvertently struck Miss Ettling's back with her locker door. She said: "Oh, I'm sorry! It was a mistake; I didn't see you." The next day, in the teachers' room, Miss Ettling kicked Mrs. Andrews in the shin, then smiled and said: "It was a mistake; I didn't see you."

A girl in Miss Ettling's class, Diane Halpmann, had been happy in her work, looking forward to a career in nursing. But one day her mother came to school, crying that now Diane hated hygiene, that Miss Ettling had turned upon her, upbraided her, and finally slapped her hard, without cause.

The principal, requesting that the superintendent investigate, listed numerous other instances of corporal punishment by this teacher. These were not denied, but Miss Ettling had always promised not to offend again. One angry mother, whose child

Miss Ettling had slapped, went directly to the classroom and punched Miss Ettling in the eye. "School was upset for the entire day. Miss Ettling threatened to go to the police, but I pointed out to her that the whole class would testify that she had struck the child. I must report this matter, for I do not know what may happen at any time in this teacher's room."

To the psychiatrist, Miss Ettling stated: "My boy friend was a friend of my principal. He announced his engagement to another girl. I resented that he hadn't told me before the others. I wrote a note to the principal about it. He sent for me and in front of two other teachers he said: 'It's all sex.' It was about this time that I got nervous. I had a lot of anger in me and I couldn't express it . . . I realized that I knew nothing about sex, so I made a thorough investigation and study of sex. Following this, I changed into a belligerent person. I avoided people, particularly teachers. But I always felt ready to fight."

She admitted difficulty in controlling her class, especially one or two "hecklers."

"*Diagnosis:* Schizophrenic reaction, paranoid type. *Recommendation:* At present, this teacher is considered actively psychotic, but since her functioning as stated by her principal is not too bad, she could be allowed to continue teaching, provided she has psychotherapy and close observation."

In her interview before the Retirement Board, Miss Ettling was asked whether it was true that she had told the psychiatrist that people talk about her.

"*Miss Ettling:* Yes, that is true. That is because I am attractive to men and to women, too.

"*Question:* How do you know that?

"*Miss Ettling:* Well, they make remarks to me, lewd and inviting remarks—of a sex nature. I hear them even when I am alone in my room. I don't know anything about sex. I don't want them to make obscene advances to me.

"Question: Why do you carry your head to one side? Do you have arthritis?

"Miss Ettling: No. It's because I know men want me and they suffer. I want to help them, so I turn my head and lower my eyes. The men can't help themselves and I try to help them.

"Question: How do you know you are so attractive to men?

"Miss Ettling: I can read their minds. I know what they think and I know what they want. It isn't their fault. I am sorry for them. They all want one thing and that makes me mad. That goes for the women too. They are no better than the men."

Throughout the interview Miss Ettling held her head to one side and directed her gaze toward the table. When told to straighten her head and lift her eyes, she obeyed, but after a moment resumed her former posture. It was clear that long habit had fixed the distorted pose.

Miss Ettling stated that she had received an indecent proposal in the anteroom, while awaiting the Committee interview. The psychiatrist advisor to the Committee declared that Miss Ettling was in a psychotic state, with many characteristics of schizophrenia: "seclusiveness, loss of affect, suspicion, irritability with ostensible amiability, self-depreciation, guilt, unreality, auditory hallucinations (not neurotic), paranoid trends, catatonic elements, distorted judgment, rationalization, loss of insight."

Miss Alice Ettling was retired.

More than one instance of corporal punishment has been brought to light through pupil or parental retaliation. Violence breeds violence, and those who seek to rule by the rod may expect to have it turned upon them. There is a lack of self-respect inherent in the infliction of corporal punishment, which produces in turn a lack of respect for the one who uses force. Some persons misuse the term; they metaphorically roll down their sleeves after a blow and say: "That'll teach him a healthy respect

for his betters!"—but what it teaches is rather fear, hatred, suppressed rebellion. And sometimes the counterattack is not suppressed.

Mrs. Katherine Beach, aged 43, had had 19 years of Satisfactory teaching of health education when she called the principal's office from the gymnasium one morning, to complain that six girls had assaulted her. They had struck her repeatedly on the head and shoulders, with books and with their fists. They threatened to "get" any pupil who reported them, then ran from the building. Mrs. Beach did not recognize them, and said she thought they were intruders, not pupils of the school.

The principal called the assistant superintendent, who gave Mrs. Beach permission to go home. She did not return for the rest of the week.

This incident led to an investigation of Mrs. Beach's record, which revealed absences of 435 days in the past 10 years. The principal reported that she complained of frequent migraine headaches, sometimes so severe she was barely able to see. She "drags herself" to school; sometimes she lay down in the teachers' room for half the day. The principal's report continued: "She is quite severe; she scolds and cuffs her pupils indiscriminately. When I talk to her about corporal punishment and its dangers, she replies: 'That's the real trouble! Spare the rod and spoil the child. That's why we have so many problem children, so many bums, so many delinquent girls. We coddle our graduates into careers of crime. Think that over.'

"I believe that Mrs. Beach has outlived her usefulness in the school and should be separated from the service."

The psychiatrist reported that Mrs. Beach's headaches were so severe and so continuous as to make her occupationally incapacitated. When the Retirement Committee recommended her retirement, Mrs. Beach asked permission to say a few words. She said:

"I think I am incapacitated for teaching and I am happy, very

happy, to retire. I warn you there is much that is wrong with our schools. The main thing is the way you pamper your pupils. It's the 'progressive' education that is making softies and criminals out of the children. It gives them no sense of responsibility. God help your teachers who are not old enough to retire. You may think I talk nonsense. Believe me, it's not nonsense. Some time you will rue the day you decided not to give a misbehaving child a good paddling. That's what a child understands. Do you know that in England when a child gets a paddling the parents have to pay for it? Think that over! Thank you. Goodbye."

Mrs. Beach had always been rated Satisfactory, with no complaint from her principal nor any suggestion that she had "outlived her usefulness," until she herself was "paddled" by six schoolgirls.

There are many situations, even many regions, where corporal punishment is part of the normal and accepted pattern of discipline. In many a little red schoolhouse, the new teacher was challenged to establish his authority by thrashing the town bully. If the bully won, the town had to seek another schoolmaster.

There are neighborhoods where the usual home pattern includes discipline by blows, where the school may deem it impossible to avoid an occasional measure of the same sort, while effecting transition to less physical motives for good conduct. Fear of punishment, as a reason for proper behavior, stands low on the list of emotions conducive to self-respect and friendly, co-operative growth.

The immediate effects of corporal punishment—providing outlet for the teacher's irritation or bullying impulse and startling the children into temporary obedience—lead some weak or sadistic teachers to ignore its deeper harm. Forty years ago, when New York was establishing regional disciplinary schools, the new school would start with a full faculty but a skeleton pupil

load, five to a class. In one such school, there were seven teachers, two of them men. At the opening day assembly, while the "progressive" principal was conveniently out of the room, the man in charge of the highest grade boxed the ears, one after the other, of his five children, then announced: "I can do the same in any class, any time it's needed." The classes were organized in military pattern, and a month later, when the full complement of children came, the first students, now well trained, were clapped on as officers. These schools continued until educational theory changed.

Some teachers, overbearing in spirit or physique, like to inflict corporal punishment themselves upon their pupils. Others, through inclination or what they deem necessity, apply the physical force through deputies. A monitor, being one of the class, can often do what the teacher dare not. There may be, as has been mentioned previously, an explicit order or an implied permission for this transfer of brute force.

Henry Thompson, beginning to teach, came as a substitute to a school where the principal assigned him to an "ungraded" class. "Teach them what you can," the principal said, "but keep order. You can take them to the gym any time it's empty." The neighborhood was a poor one; most of the fathers were Irish or Italian unskilled laborers, with Negroes beginning to filter in.

As Henry Thompson entered the classroom on his first morning (Wednesday), there was a lull of expectancy. A big Irish lad, much bigger than Henry, lumbered up to him and said: "You're the third this week!"

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. The threat was hardly veiled. Henry sat down. He looked at the burly fellow and innocently inquired: "How many in here can lick you?"

"Huh?" The bully was taken aback. "I'd like to see them try!"

"Do you think you can keep order on this side of the room?"

"Sure! It's a cinch!"

Meanwhile Henry had taken note which of the Italian boys was holding his gang in leash while Mike was testing the teacher. He beckoned, and Pete came over. He took up the same challenge for the other half of the room.

Under these shrewdly chosen monitors, the class got into swing. It used the gym only during the regular physical training period, when Henry got gloves for the class, and let them pick up fine points of boxing while using up their energy on one another.

He reached a point where he made frequent use of the blackboard, sometimes even ignoring the old warning: never turn your back to the class. On one such occasion he heard a scuffle. Pete was pummeling a youngster whom he had knocked to the floor; the boy had a knife in his hand. The teacher did not interfere. Pete took the knife, gave the boy one final slap to confirm his authority; then he rose, closed the weapon, and handed it to Mr. Thompson: "He was coming at you!"

At the end of the term, Henry Thompson was still teaching that class—and really teaching. Mike and Pete had changed from gang-leading bullies to responsible, self-disciplined leaders. Save for the one occasion of the boy with the knife, they had used their personality, not their fists. And the class as a whole had discovered that there may be almost as much fun in learning as in raising hell. Moreover, they walked with a new measure of self-respect; it was no longer a stigma to be in the "ungraded" class.

Another physical instance of faculty-student co-operation won considerable publicity, with newspaper editorials and Parent-Teacher Association argument, when a principal resolved a quarrel between two boys by taking them to the school basement and letting them fight it out. Such activity, no doubt, is catalogued under "the manly art of self-defense." Military training, which may include jabbing a bayonet at a moving dummy

and learning the best way to gouge out the eye of a hand-to-hand enemy, extends the pattern of physical force beyond the spankings of the nursery.

There are many ways in which a teacher may do violence to the personality and the spirit of a child. Some teachers, possibly despairing of less physical methods of class control, possibly through an inner though unadmitted sadistic streak, seem to explore these ways of torture.

Such a teacher was Mrs. Elizabeth Voelkel, aged 47, with 23 years of Satisfactory service. After she was found trying to teach while kneeling on a child, Mrs. Voelkel was removed from the classroom, reporting daily to the office of the Superintendent.

The story her principal then unfolded included these episodes:

"There have been many complaints from parents that Mrs. Voelkel has taken objects from children and failed to return them. She has at times placed such objects on top of a closet, so that children have had to climb up to recover them.

"She has been accused of putting children under her desk and compelling them to stay there. She admitted having put one child there, 'to keep him out of mischief.' One parent complained that Mrs. Voelkel had threatened to hang her son in the clothes closet.

"She has frequently been accused of hitting children and has at times admitted such conduct. She has an uncontrollable temper, going into a tantrum, using violent corporal punishment. On recovery she is very sorry. She goes to the children's homes on Saturdays and evenings, and begs the parents to withdraw their charges against her. They resent this procedure, as Mrs. Voelkel has ill-treated their children and they are in no mood to help her.

"She has told me that I am too old to handle a school and I should have been married. She has told teachers that I have a man in the school and my morals should be investigated.

"Her personal appearance is disturbing to the children, because

she comes to school disheveled and in costumes unsuited to teaching. On many occasions her clothing is in a state of disrepair, fastened together with a large safety pin.

"Many of the parents say that, if their children are put into her class again, they will transfer them to parochial schools."

The psychiatric examination revealed nothing wrong with Mrs. Voelkel beyond "personality deviations . . . Mrs. Voelkel may well be an efficient and capable teacher. She is well oriented in all respects and reveals no evidence of delusions or hallucinations or other such definite abnormal trends. It is a matter for the school authorities to decide whether the indubitable personality deviations—which may be included under the broad category of psychoneurosis—are exhibiting themselves to a degree incompatible with the proper guidance of children."

When parents and principal repeated their charges before the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Voelkel vehemently and excitedly dismissed them as frauds. Mrs. Elizabeth Voelkel was retired.

While there may be disagreement as to the effect of corporal punishment on the child, there is no question that its use indicates an insufficiency in the teacher. A blow may spring from an instant's irritability, or an easy acceptance of a quick (if not quack) remedy when a child misbehaves, or from a deeper disorder in the teacher's personality. Always, it is a sign of imbalance, of failure to respond at a proper level of cultural behavior. As a symptom of mental ill health, it must be weighed in the light of the mores of the neighborhood, the general practice of the school, and the background and record of the teacher.

3

Irritability

IRRITABILITY IS A FAILING with which we should all have sympathy, for which of us escapes its stingy tail? Most of us, fortunately, can curb its more irascible manifestations; those who cannot, should not be entrusted with the care of children. Irritability is excessive when, in an adult, it repeatedly breaks out in spells of sulking, in muttering of imprecations or in shouts, swearing and abusive language, in fits of temper, rages, tantrums, and other signs of loss of self-control. A suit against a School Board was won by the parents of a boy whose teacher admitted having broken the boy's nose. The teacher's explanation was: "I lost my temper." He also lost his job.

Remarks culled from many histories of mentally ill teachers indicate that recurrent irritability is a reason for searching more deeply into the teacher's personality pattern. Even a single outburst, as in the first two instances that follow, may call for fuller investigation.

"The officer on duty asked her not to park her car near the school; she called him vile names and threatened to report him to the Police Commissioner."

"He refused to stay in school to talk with the complaining parent, and when she left with him he called her indecent names and pointed to his private parts."

"I have repeatedly talked to her about her tantrums, but she continues to fly into rages and abuse the children unmercifully."

"When he is in a rage, which happens too frequently, he

strikes children, pulls their hair—apparently striking out at whatever happens to be near."

These are just a few items from charges against many similarly uncontrolled teachers.

Irving Donn—to make one of these stories more precise—at the age of 42 had been teaching shopwork for 18 Satisfactory years. Then the principal requested a psychiatric examination for Mr. Donn.

The class had sat for 20 minutes listening to the teacher and a boy exchange vituperation. Then the teacher left his class unsupervised, continuing the quarrel en route to and in the principal's office.

Next day, the principal called Mr. Donn, during a free period, for a discussion of shop management. Mr. Donn began to rail. He exclaimed: "Get yourself another teacher!" and stalked out in a huff.

Within the week, three boys came to the office to complain of Mr. Donn's outbursts of vile talk and violence. One boy said the teacher had thrown a wooden brush at him. The principal's report expressed fear: the teacher "has a violent temper and may do serious injury to a pupil at any time." Mr. Donn's only answers to the principal's attempts to help him were: "Why don't you let me do my work?" and "If you don't like what I'm doing, get somebody else."

To the psychiatrist, Mr. Donn was most affable. He was mild, but vague, though denying any points of trouble. "He loosened up somewhat as the examination progressed, and reluctantly admitted that for some years he has been unable to concentrate, has spent many of his evenings in an aimless, futile manner, and has had great difficulty in getting up in time for school . . . It is my opinion that this man is suffering from schizophrenia, paranoid type, and that he is unfit to continue as a teacher. There is no doubt that for many years he has been manifesting a slowly progressing personality disorganization and that this

has become accentuated in the last 4 years. He is in immediate and urgent need of psychiatric treatment."

To the Retirement Board Mr. Donn, in continuing mild demeanor, admitted his failings and promised to improve. Questioned as to what he would do if he were retired, he replied: "I don't know anything. I don't know why I should be retired, I haven't done anything." His responses showed lack of insight into his mental condition. Irving Donn was retired. In his case, the irritability seems to have been a defense against a troubling sense of insecurity he could not face.

Among the privileges that go with supervisory work is the doubtful one of being less immediately amenable to correction for what may severally seem minor breeches of decorum. Children are prompt to complain at home about a teacher's misbehavior; their parents may come angrily to school, or build up emphasis by comparing notes at a parents' meeting. Teachers, of course, talk to one another about their supervisors, but they are generally reluctant to make official complaint. Being adults, they are better balanced, better able to bear annoyance and injustice than children are. The effect upon them of supervisory misconduct is likely to be less lasting than their own pressures and influence are upon the child. Furthermore, since most conferences of supervisor and teacher are private, it is questionable as to whose interpretation of any difference between them is the accurate one. Which, the supervisor or the supervised, is the more likely to be believed?

Statements of teachers not under investigation, however, may corroborate more biased claims that a supervisor has lost his self-control. "We're lucky if we catch our principal in a good mood," said one of a faculty questioned because of a colleague's charges. "Then we hurry to make our recommendations, because we can never tell how long it will last." In another school, the staff was more discouraged: "We never make suggestions

to the principal; it's impossible to tell how he will react. Likely as not he'll fly into one of his rages." Another group of teachers declared: "Our principal isn't harsh, he is plain cruel. He yells at us all the time, finds fault over trivia and seems to enjoy our discomfiture. All of us are under constant nervous strain."

And here is a principal, looking at his supervisor: "An unwitting word, an innocent remark, drives my superintendent into a fury."

The Illinois Association of Teachers of English recently decided to observe the teachers "as their students see them" and asked for a series of anonymous appraisals of various qualities. In the children's telling, irritability stands prominent. It is frequently linked with corporal punishment. One teacher "never has a smile on her face; she always looks as if she is about to kill somebody. She does nothing but stand in front of the room and watch you like a hawk. Her favorite words are 'Get that smile off your face!' "

Another teacher "maintained discipline by making his students fear him. When he was angry he shouted at the top of his lungs. Although he never touched the girls, he thought nothing of grabbing a boy's ear and shaking him. One day he caught a boy reading a library book in class, and he grabbed the boy and started shaking him. At the same time he threw the book across the room where it narrowly missed sailing through the open window."

One teacher took better aim; he was "a strong, violent-tempered man. He occasionally threw books at students who were causing disturbances in his class. The books generally hit their mark. Once he picked up two boys who were talking and knocked their heads together."

Such examples of irritated and irrational behavior make lasting impact upon the impressionable child. "The one day I will never forget," one account begins, "is the day when the boy

next to me was yanked out of his seat and put under the teacher's desk. Maybe this wasn't too bad, but when he moved she would kick him. That was the limit. Why the boy didn't walk out of that class and complain to the office, I'll never know."

Enough boys know, and agree that such treatment isn't "too bad." For the disciplinary practice of putting a boy under the teacher's desk, while the short-skirted teacher sits before it, has been prevalent enough to give rise to numerous questionable jokes. There are also sexual implications the pupil doesn't recognize in such a report as this one: "I think she enjoyed giving kids a licking. If she got the urge, she would ask a person to come up to her desk, lie across her lap, and bingo! he got it! She was right-handed, so you had to lie across her lap in a certain way. If you didn't, she would ask you to turn around."

Then there is the teacher who deliberately used sex for class control, as pictured in this report of her class practice: "She wouldn't use the customary type of punishment when a boy talked out of turn. On the contrary, she would call him up front; then she would proceed, in a voice dripping with sweetness, to tell him of her undying love for him and how she couldn't stand to have him too far away from her. She would then complete her attack by compelling him out of utter obedience to sit on her lap. If the boy managed to live through this much, she would hug him and finish him off with a kiss on his forehead, leaving her lipstick imprint stranded there. All of this went on in front of the whole class and the poor boy had suffered so great an embarrassment that after the treatment he would slowly crawl back to his desk, never again to make another sound without permission." Another type of boy would deliberately cause trouble in order to get the same treatment!

There is frequent comment that teachers seek discipline, if not perverse pleasure, through embarrassing and humiliating a pupil before the class.

Children are not only impressionable, they are also discerning. It is dangerous to assume that their minds and spirits are not

lastingly affected by what they see and undergo in the classroom. There is sound, though juvenile, criticism in the account of a teacher whose classes "were always in an uproar. He would tell us to 'shut up' when he was trying to gain some order. I don't think a teacher should tell his students to 'shut up' when he is trying to conduct a class. He really got mad when the room was noisy, and he was always yelling at the kids to keep quiet; but he didn't do anything about it but yell. I believe he could have kept order if he had used other methods."

Fortunately, there are other methods. Even a strict teacher may find favor with her pupils. "I liked her," one boy reported, "because she was strict enough to let you know she wanted what she wanted, but not so strict you thought she was unjust." And a goodly number of teachers merit the description one pupil admiringly offered: "She didn't punish students but kept them busy instead."

The strict teacher, however is seldom irritable. Irritability is associated with fussiness, with impatience, with inability to maintain a poised control in adverse or unpleasant circumstances. Thus an easily irritated teacher does double harm. She grates upon the children, making them dislike the classroom and therefore the subject matter; she turns their minds from any desire for learning. At the same time, instead of inculcating a poised and well-balanced approach to life, she gives an example of fluttery, quickly annoyed behavior; she presents a woefully simple pattern for a child to follow.

Bad examples are always easiest to copy. Good behavior calls for self-discipline and self-control; misbehavior needs only the relaxing of restraint. "Advanced" educators who, imitating Freud, cry for full self-expression ("Obey that impulse!") fail to recognize that civilization has grown through the control and redirection of impulses and the "natural" self-centered desires. But when the teacher sets the example, who can blame the child? Irritability is a catching affliction, and easily becomes chronic.

4

Nagging and Abuse

ANY OF THE WAYS in which irritation breaks into open manifestation may itself become a major aspect of behavior, and thus a symptom that calls for deeper concern. Nagging and abuse are not just rocky outcroppings of a generally irritable personality; they are more probably signs of an unavowed insecurity, which masks itself under this outer aggression.

Miss Ella Thorndike, aged 43, had taught in Michigan for 25 Satisfactory years, when a parent came to the principal to complain of the foul language the teacher had used to her daughter Katherine. Katherine had been given a note by the office, to take to the various teachers and, for no reason she knew, Miss Thorndike had called her a "louse" and a "bum," and had heaped abuse upon her. The bewildered girl had gone out crying; her mother wanted to know why she had been abused, and insisted upon an apology. The principal promised to get to the root of the affair.

Asked about her language, Miss Thorndike at first denied the charge, saying that language and behavior "in this belt" were very poor, and she was teaching the class the real meanings of the words "louse," "bum," "bitch." The principal mentioned that other parents had complained she was constantly threatening to leave the class and not come back. Miss Thorndike explained that she found this helpful in securing discipline, and she hoped the children appreciated what the school was doing for them. "They use too much bad language," she continued.

Miss Thorndike hesitated, then apparently decided to take the principal into her confidence. "The children are part of the plot," she told him. "Yes. They are plotting to gouge out my eyes."

The principal asked if the plot was aimed only at her.

"Yes, but at others too, at many people in America."

"Are people in school involved?"

"Yes, a few children. I overheard them first in my class last term. They point their thumbs; that is the sign that your eyes are to be gouged. That girl who brought the note made the sign.

"On the day before Thanksgiving the class said: 'They are going to kill you.' I went to the police. I have seen and talked with the FBI. They cannot help me. My lawyer tells me that if I mention names I will have to get out a summons, but I am too friendly."

The principal, who was in his first term in the school, tried to reassure Miss Thorndike and said he would help her. He intended, he later said, to observe her carefully. But the next day the school had a fire drill, and through the silence of the march across the school yard, Miss Thorndike's voice could be heard shouting: "Did you ever see such bitches! Let them try it! It's against the law. If they keep it up, they'll be sued for $500,000! That's a lot of money, $500,000. That'll teach the bums!" There was considerable laughter as the lines of children filed out of school.

The principal thereupon called the assistant superintendent, to whom Miss Thorndike repeated her story of persecution and threats to gouge out her eyes. She was wearing dark glasses. She said she had begun to wear them about 8 months ago, because "people will think twice before striking a person wearing dark glasses."

Miss Thorndike went into further detail for the psychiatrist, who diagnosed "auditory hallucinations . . . definite paranoid ideas." Before the School Board, Miss Thorndike made definite accusations.

"When I reported for duty the Friday before school opened, Lillian Bricker (another teacher) turned to some members of the staff and said: 'I'll do it!' She stuck out her two thumbs, meaning 'I'll gouge out her eyes.'

"Elsie Reich rose from her seat at a school conference and made the same threatening gesture to gouge out my eyes. I have had similar threats from other members of the staff, and from several students. At a fire drill Jack Elliott (a teacher) approached me and stuck out his thumbs. Louis Harrison, a pupil, did the same thing.

"It's happened on the bus, too. I 'phoned the bus company and said that I used it every day and what could they do about it? They said they could do nothing; they could not afford to get any more police. The next time, I 'phoned their main office and asked if they could do anything to people who threatened to gouge out passengers' eyes. The man who answered the phone said he would see to it. But it did not stop."

Dr. Reilly, a school psychiatrist, inquired: "Do you ever think this might not be true? That you are giving an unreal significance to this thumb gesture?"

Miss Thorndike replied, indignantly: "I know it is true. There isn't the slightest doubt about it. Don't you believe me?"

She had no insight into the fact that she was ill, and when the School Board voted to retire her, she refused to leave the office, and broke into abusive and obscene language.

Her brother, reached on the telephone, said that for a long time the family had considered her hopeless; he now asked that she be sent to a mental hospital. When the doctor and two nurses arrived, Miss Thorndike again shrieked obscenities, and tore at the nurses for trying to gouge out her eyes. She had to be put into a straitjacket and carried to the ambulance.

Parents might well ponder the effect on their children of a teacher who sees in every swinging arm a threat to blind her, whose inner tensions find release in profanity and threats before

the class, which titters half in amusement, half in fear. Miss Thorndike might have gone on teaching until her disordered mind led her to violence in the classroom, had not her abusive language been reported by the irate parent of a child who had merely brought a note into her room. Apparently the children in her own class had grown accustomed to her distorted ways.

There is a natural tendency, when one is irritated, to burst out in attacks upon whoever is near. There was a medieval saying: "When the cook spoils the roast, the musician is beaten." Whatever the cause of the teacher's annoyance, the children are the sufferers. Home conditions, wet weather, a broken appointment, a school conference that afternoon when the teacher wanted to go shopping—any of a hundred irritants may be plaguing the teacher. Then she "takes it out on" the class. With some teachers, unfortunately, the very presence of the class is an annoyance, the fact of having to work a constant fret. Children in the class of such a teacher, term after term, feel the sharpness of her tongue, in her scolding or sarcastic utterances. This wears their tempers thin; it makes them hate school; it gives them a jaundiced attitude toward the adult world. But it seldom provides grounds for decisive action against the teacher. It may continue for years without reaching proportions that demand official attention. Sometimes it is revealed by wholly different circumstances in the teacher's career.

Jane Dory was a teacher whose nagging should have brought concerned attention to her, long before she was forced upon official notice from outside sources. She was 49 years old, and had 29 years of Satisfactory teaching in elementary school. She had had a maternity leave, which was terminated after 3 months; and she was divorced. The Superintendent received a note from a matchmaker, complaining that he could not collect $70 that Jane Dory owed him. The Superintendent sent for the marriage broker and the teacher.

The matchmaker stated: "I am an honest man and I try to make an honest living. I have been in business for 40 years, and I'm glad my customers are not all like her. It's a hard life. I know you are a busy man, so I'll come to the point. I sent Jane seven men, seven fine young men, all fine prospects, and all I charged was $10 apiece. I call that a bargain, but she refuses to pay me a cent. That's the truth; I always tell the truth."

Jane declared: "It's true he sent me seven men, but you have never seen such men. Five of them were so feeble that marriage should have been the last thing on their minds. They needed a nurse, not a wife. One was a lovely old gentleman, old enough to be my grandfather. Another carried a cane, not as an ornament but as a support. The two younger men both had the nerve to ask me what provision I would make for them if I could no longer work. And for *that* he asks $70! I was a fool to have been taken in by his promises. I don't owe him a single red cent."

The Superintendent suggested that the matchmaker send him one or two of the men he had presented to Jane. The matchmaker objected, and when he was convinced that the Superintendent would do nothing unless he saw one of the proposed bridegrooms, he said with resignation:

"Who wants to be bothered with a woman like that! I'd have to pay *them* to come to you. My time is worth more than the $70. I'm sorry I ever began with her. She wants a fine, rich, healthy, good-looking young man. But what young man would ever want her? Look at her. Some bargain!"

And there that matter dropped. It was 2 years later that Jane herself came to the office of the district superintendent to complain of her assistant principal. She had had a plastic surgeon perform a cosmetic operation on her face; it had gone wrong, and after consulting two physicians she was suing the surgeon for $50,000 damages. And she accused her assistant principal, Miss Henlein, of having "engineered" the operation. Miss Hen-

lein, she declared, was jealous of her popularity in Army and Navy circles.

"When I get married," Jane said, "all the Marines will be there, that's what they think of me. They love me. Do you think anybody loves Miss Henlein? How could they? She's no lady; she's a disgrace. If it weren't for her, my face would still be as beautiful as it was. Miss Henlein kept on saying 'Jane, if you have that plastic, you'll be a changed person!' She put my class into Mr. James' room because Mr. James was operated on by that surgeon. I was a fool to be caught in her trap. Look at me now. I know I look like a monkey!"

The district superintendent, upon hearing this story, visited Jane Dory's school. His report continues: "Mrs. Dory is at odds with pupils, teachers, assistant principal, principal, clerks, and custodian. The word they all have for her is 'Nag.' This has been going on for years. She is highly excitable. To me, in unbridled language, she made an emotional attack upon her principal for failing to remove disciplinary problems from her classroom. The children who present these problems in Mrs. Dory's class behave well in other classes. She creates disorder by her nagging, scolding, and loud voice which is very irritating. She was a pleasant though distraught woman when I saw her in my office; when I saw her in her own school she was a virago. Her high-strung personality causes disorder and nervousness in the children she teaches. I ascribe her class's high rate of truancy, the highest in the school, to her pernicious influence. Mrs. Dory is blindly unaware of the harm she is doing. She thinks herself an excellent teacher, but she is the only one to think so."

Mrs. Dory was given a psychiatric examination. The psychiatrist found: "In spite of this patient's delusions, there is some insight present. She recognizes that she is ill, even perhaps slightly ill 'nervously,' but she believes that in the main she is physically ill. However, she lacks judgment as to the cause of her illness, laying it at the hands of a surgeon who performed a

slight plastic operation, and extending her persecutory trend to the assistant superintendent of the school district.

Diagnosis: "This teacher is suffering from schizophrenia, of mixed paranoid and hebephrenic form. This condition may rapidly worsen and involve her or people around her in dangerous complications. She should be promptly relieved of her duties."

Before the Retirement Committee, Jane Dory repeated that her plastic operation had been "engineered by the assistant principal and her stooges." She detailed the persecution at great length. She denied any trouble in the classroom, and declared that everybody who was honest would state she was an excellent teacher.

Jane Dory was retired.

Hers is another instance of a lengthy failing, "going on for years," not recognized in time to help the teacher, whose illness and consequent constant nagging must have soured the disposition of many children in all her classes.

We cannot estimate in what numbers, or to what degree, juvenile delinquents and adults who are antisocial, embittered, cynical, even criminal, were pointed in this direction by hatreds and fears engendered in the classroom. The more resilient probably throw off such influences; the weaker may be permanently harmed. It is important that a teacher, to whom the child looks for social direction, who should inculcate not merely information but poise, balance, ability to meet untoward situations with sound judgment; it is critically important that the teacher herself be a sane and balanced individual, capable of inspiring by cheerful ways and kindly spirit. Supervisors must be taught to recognize more promptly the signs of mental illness, which were suffered to go long unheeded in the case of Jane Dory.

The constant harassment of teachers by a nagging principal is even more difficult to check. Its effects may, however, be even more widespread, for the sharp tongue of the supervisor may be

echoed by embittered teachers in many classrooms, until one person's affliction has debased the tone of the whole school. Mrs. Norma Hughes, aged 49, a long successful teacher in a southern state and mother of three, suffered a "nervous breakdown." In her interview after she had requested leave for restoration of health, Mrs. Hughes declared:

"I don't ascribe all my difficulties to school conditions, but I think you will agree that they have a share in them. My principal, Mrs. Dexter, never has a smile or a friendly word. She called me 'stupid,' 'rattlebrain,' 'scatterbrain,' or whatever abuse came into her head. When these indignities brought tears to my eyes, she would say: 'Go ahead and cry! Just like a woman; but you can't tyrannize over me with your tears. So stop your bawling and go back to your classroom and teach, if what you do can be called teaching.' She would constantly threaten me with an Unsatisfactory rating—she never gave me one—or with charges, or a special report to the district superintendent. And what she said to me she said to other teachers. More than one teacher has broken down under her oppression. Look at the record and see how many have asked for transfers to other schools. I might have been able to stand up to Mrs. Dexter's kind of supervision, but my mother was ill with diabetes, and my father bedridden with a heart condition, and I just couldn't take it all."

Mrs. Hughes was given her leave of absence. Two years passed by. Then the entire faculty of 51 teachers drew up a bill of particulars against the principal, Mrs. Dexter, covering a long period of nagging and oversevere scolding and abuse, and they went in a body to the School Board to complain. Mrs. Dexter was examined on these charges, reprimanded, and *transferred to another school.* Whether she reformed, or found a more docile faculty to abuse, the records do not say.

In class activity, as in life outside, a little quick-witted and good-humored irony may drive home a point or deftly check an

impulse to disorder. Whenever a child is thus made a momentary butt of the teacher's sharp tongue, it is essential for the spirit of that child that there be an immediate conciliatory reestablishment of peace. The child and the class must be made to feel that there is no singled victim but a mutual sharing of a quickened appreciation. This following smile and friendly word mark the difference between good-natured humor and arbitrary and harassing abuse.

Children are generally docile, and a nagging teacher may repress her classes for years. Naturally, she will not browbeat the children while her supervisor is in the room; then, she is likely to exude smiles and excessive kindliness. Alone in command, she flicks the stinging remark upon a child's spirit, and the lash of her tongue may do more lasting harm than a physical thrashing. Embarrassment, sense of inferiority, hatred may be engendered —a bitterness that goes out of the classroom to distort an entire lifetime, making the individual unhappy and irritating relatives and associates. A more resistant spirit may ape the teacher, and in its turn find pleasure in sarcastic remarks, nasty jibes, and biting comments to embarrass and hurt those nearby. So common are the condescending brush-off, the tangential insult, the indirect indignity, that for a time one brand of "sophisticate" citizen sought pre-eminence in the practice. The insult comes to seem a clever "wisecrack."

Ideally, such words should be shed by a wholesome spirit as water by a loon. The poet Cowper once remarked:

> A moral, sensible, and well-bred man
> Will not affront me, and no other can.

Unfortunately most of us, less fortified with self-respect than Cowper, less rainproof than the loon, tend to quail beneath a shower of scorn. That it is undeserved makes it no easier to bear. And when it falls from a teacher upon a child who dares not retort, in front of a class that sits in silent glee, such verbal abuse leaves lasting scars upon the spirit.

5

Excessive Strictness

ANOTHER ASPECT of classroom behavior that calls for investigation is a too rigid attitude on the part of the teacher. Severity, or rigid strictness, may at times be justified, and in many cases it is merely one unpleasant aspect of an otherwise fairly well-adjusted personality. It may, however, be a sign of more deep-seated difficulties.

Strictness toward others, if it be a mild manifestation, may represent a sublimation, a successful transformation, of sadistic impulses. It may, in sporadic outbreak, represent the temporary displacement of internal tensions, such as a rancor against the principal that the teacher dares not directly express and therefore converts into stricter demands upon the pupils. As a continuing pattern, the strictness toward children in a class may be a defense mechanism against an intrinsic softness, overcompensated by the severity toward those under the teacher's control. Such a teacher triumphs in class, though subordinated and subjected in general contacts and at home. Whatever the background of the severity, it should not be allowed to go—and grow—unregarded.

Even a momentary expression of severity in an otherwise equable teacher may have unforeseen consequences. Ed Coleman, a successful high-school teacher in a neighborhood of racial strains, had in one of his classes a boy, Bill Canton, with an attention span of about 15 seconds. To keep this boy's mind-wandering and fidgeting from disrupting the class, Mr. Coleman appointed him "Sanitation Secretary." Canton went happily and quietly about the room with the wastepaper basket, to keep the room tidy and

clean. On occasion, Mr. Coleman himself would drop some paper, to keep the boy occupied. Once, however, when Canton was particularly fidgety or the teacher was wrapped in other concerns, in a spurt of severity Mr. Coleman exclaimed: "Canton, I wish I had a chain to hold you down!"

The next day, at the beginning of the period, Frank DeLuca came to Mr. Coleman with a 2-foot length of iron links.

"Here, Teach!"

"What's that?"

"A chain for Canton!"

Mr. Coleman had recovered from his rigid impulse of the previous day. He laughed, said he had been joking, and sent DeLuca to his seat. The period passed uneventfully. As the class filed out, Mr. Coleman, standing at the window, sensed a swirling movement and swung to the side. Past his head the chain crashed through the window and fell in a shower of broken glass to the street two stories below. The teacher had asked for a chain for Canton and—one way or another—Frank was going to give him that chain!

There was more lasting rigidity in the case of Dorothy Kaiser, a 55-year-old New England high-school teacher of German, who had had a Satisfactory rating for 28 years. Miss Kaiser went to the principal, saying that her pupils were making her more and more angry, and requesting a transfer to an all-girls' school. She stated that she was one of the city's best teachers of German but that she was not able, with such pupils, to do her best work.

As no vacancy was available, Miss Kaiser continued to complain. "The standards are too low. The children don't want to learn. They're hoodlums; it's a waste of time trying to teach them."

Given a medical examination, Miss Kaiser confessed herself worn out. "You try to bring these children up to the mark, and what does it get you? You get old before your time. I am utterly exhausted. I have no energy even at the beginning of the school day. It's all so futile. The children don't want to learn."

The psychiatrist reported Miss Kaiser's feelings: "There are a few boys in the class so annoying it cannot be overlooked, even though she recognizes she may see misbehavior sooner than other teachers. She also admits her temper outbursts in class, but protests she cannot accept the idea of giving students higher grades than they deserve just for the sake of promoting them."

The report continued: "Patient generally has been conscious of her obligations in life to the point of catering to them too much. She was dominated by both her parents, and seems to be trying now to dominate her students. There results a further reaction of oversensitiveness and frequent dissatisfaction at their inability to reach her goal of perfection . . . There is no evidence of mental disorganization, but there is a complete imbalance between emotional expression and control by the intelligence . . . It seems to me that she is straining herself excessively to keep on teaching. It seems doubtful that she can function adequately under this strain."

Miss Kaiser's nervousness was not lessened by her fear that she could not live on her pension if retired. The School Board, however, saw no recourse save to retire her.

There are times when strictness may seem quite a negligible defect, if, indeed, not virtue. It may be a characteristic of a teacher older than most of those in the school, attributable to her age, or her old-fashioned training, or her reluctance or inability to accept the more permissive progressive attitude the principal prefers. It may be part of a lifelong personality pattern, of which the strictness is an accordant attribute. It may be with tacit approval labeled *firmness;* the same quality in disapproval may be called *rigidity*. But it should not be ignored.

For 2 years the new principal had noted nothing exceptional in Miss Julia Buhler, aged 34, teaching a class of first-year children. He later wrote that he found in her work "nothing very wrong except an excessive firmness in her classroom which is out of keeping with the philosophy held by me and by the rest of

my faculty." So Miss Buhler went on teaching for 2 more years, before several teachers came to the principal to ask whether he had heard Miss Buhler's story of her Charlie and his plane. Thinking this was some sort of practical joke, the principal brushed them off. A week later, several teachers, disturbed by Miss Buhler's loud laughter in the teachers' room, sent an urgent message to the principal. He came, and Miss Buhler told him her story:

"I am in touch with an airplane. It's operated by little men, who take down every word you or I utter. They have a special radar machine. I know the code, so I can hear them; you cannot. Rabbis and priests can understand what they say. Charlie is the pilot, and Charlie knows everything. That is how I know what's going on. Ask Miss Gould, she will tell you what I told her about that sex-crazy girl in her class. How do you think I found out? I got it from Charlie in the airplane. This is a big secret and I shouldn't have talked about it. I shouldn't have told you, or Miss Gould, or my pupils; but it's true. It's a secret and I should have kept it to myself."

The principal telephoned the superintendent, who requested that Miss Buhler report to him at once. Ten minutes later the principal had a telephone call from the local priest, to whom he said that the matter was out of his hands and inquiries would have to be made of the superintendent. A few minutes later Miss Buhler 'phoned, apparently expecting to be told she might return to school. "You can get me right back," she protested; "you have only to say the word."

To the superintendent, Miss Buhler repeated her story. She added: "If you listen for a minute you will hear the airplane. Not just the motor; anybody can hear that. This is a special high-pitched radar sound. That's what brings me the code."

Miss Julia Buhler was retired. It would be interesting—and perhaps alarming—to know the effect upon the 6-year-old children in her classes of Miss Buhler's several years of confidential talks about radar and little men and secret codes that tell her all about

what goes on in the principal's office, and all about naughty and sex-crazy girls.

The teachers in the school of the principal about to be discussed did not join to complain about her; she therefore is still in charge of a school in a middle-Atlantic city. The picture of her actions is presented in the words of a teacher who took a leave of absence for "nervous exhaustion" and on his return to teaching was assigned to another school. His report must therefore be weighed as coming with bias. It is selected as one of the more reserved and less emotional of many similar complaints.

"I really did not break down, despite the fact that the doctors called my condition 'nervous exhaustion.' I wasn't nervous and I wasn't exhausted. I was just unwilling to go to my school presided over by that petty tyrant, the principal. I could no longer tolerate an administrator who felt that there was only one right way—hers. She wanted pretty plan books with thin red lines dividing the days of the week, and blue lines dividing the weeks, and double blue lines dividing the months. She wanted rooms nicely decorated to suit her feminine taste. I like a nice room, too, sunny and clean and orderly, with plants on the window sills. But I don't like a lot of trash which children cut out of magazines and newspapers hanging all over the room. My principal thinks that this is a good way to impress the superintendent and it's too bad if such stuff impresses anyone. But I have and can put up with that too . . .

"These are in themselves just examples of many petty and meaningless tyrannies. I have a sense of humor and much patience. But finally these things got under my skin and I could not take any more of this pettiness. I got tired of: 'Mr. Foster, your line is not straight.' 'Mr. Foster, no more than one child should be out of the room at a time.' (Can I help it if two children have to leave the room at the same time? May not the teacher use his judgment as to whether the request is legitimate? Last year I

enforced the principal's iron rule and one of my boys—a very good boy—defecated in his pants, and was given a foul name which the children call him to this day.)"

On and on, the report tells of the principal's petty interfering orders. "Mr. Foster, the live register of the class must be placed on the blackboard nearest the door; that's where I want it." "Mr. Foster, teachers should not talk to parents outside the school building." "Mr. Foster, I do not like to see a newspaper on a teacher's desk." And so forth, "ad infinitum and ad nauseam."

"She made me regret that I ever went in for teaching. Most of the men with whom I went to college are in business and are doing very well. Here am I, 50 years of age, having to suffer indignities at the hands of a woman who has no wisdom and no sense of humor, who is in mortal terror of her superiors and takes their advice and orders literally, applying them without discrimination to every case. Nor do I care to flatter my principal, who adores flattery, no matter how thickly applied.

"Among the worst afflictions was her weekly assembly address. Her favorite topic was diet, although she herself was greatly overweight. Her school is in an Italian neighborhood, but this is a typical assembly talk: 'Boys and girls, good morning. This is a beautiful day. You look very nice. I hope you have all had your milk today. Milk is a perfect food. But you must not eat spaghetti. Spaghetti just makes you fat, so don't eat spaghetti. Now children, how many of you had spaghetti for dinner last night? (Nearly all their hands go up.) Now tell your mothers not to give you spaghetti. It is much better to eat fruit and vegetables and to drink milk. Now don't forget to tell your mothers that fruit and vegetables are much better. Now tell me, Lucy, what will you tell your mother?' Lucy: 'I'll tell my mother she must never eat spaghetti. Spaghetti is not good. She must eat fruit and milk.'"

Mr. Foster's report concludes, "Now that I am in a school presided over by a kindly, experienced principal who isn't out

to make a record at the expense of his teachers, who isn't afraid of his supervisors, and who has the welfare of his faculty at heart, I am happy again, and again I enjoy my teaching."

Excessive strictness is especially harmful in that it sets standards not natural for children to maintain. The normally well-behaved child, who desires to please the teacher, is discouraged to find that he cannot, and might as well give up the vain attempt. Thus, setting too high a standard results in a lowering of the effort. Some children will hunt for dodges, make excuses, and pretend, or seek to curry favor and "play up to" the teacher, to win by roundabout means what they cannot attain by honest study. Some will complain at home that they feel sick and cannot go to school, or try to avoid the ordeal by truancy. Others will begin to cheat, to explore the many ways of gaining credit beyond desert. More may grow indifferent, or respond with antagonism —antagonism perhaps concealed from the teacher but vented upon classmates or at home. Bitterness increases, idealism lapses. The teacher moves virtuously on, secure in her tower of perfection, holding high her inflexible standards, unaware of the damage she is wreaking upon the humanly imperfect children in her classes.

6

Withdrawal or Hostility

QUITE DIFFERENT in response, springing from different personality variations, but equally a sign of a troubled spirit, is the withdrawal from social contacts, the shrinking within oneself, the tendency to live like a hermit. If this be not a symptom but a goal, it is still a blind-alley sort of existence, hardly desirable in a teacher, whose task includes helping guide children into ways of living harmoniously together. In the more frequent cases when the desire for isolation is a sign of deeper fears or disorders, its inward direction makes it more dangerous. If she avoids active contact with her colleagues, a teacher may be thought odd, eccentric, queer; but she is not likely to come into open conflict. She may well be left alone, left to her own inturned devices, brooding and growing increasingly ill at ease, increasingly ill, until a sudden act of violence reveals the inner disorder.

A teacher may say, as teachers have said: "The less I see of my colleagues, the better." "I'm being paid to teach, not to socialize." "Yes, I eat my lunch in the restroom next to the toilet; it's the only place I can be alone." "I have no desire to mix with other teachers." And the other teachers will shrug their shoulders, and leave their isolated colleague severely alone. Sometimes such conduct is more severe than they know.

Alice Farmer, a Satisfactory teacher for 37 years, was one who always ate by herself, in the restroom adjoining the toilet. "We have regarded her as 'queer' for years," said the principal when he finally reported her. "Many of the teachers, and especially the

assistant principal," he went on, "have tried to be friendly with her, but they gave up long ago when she would not respond to their overtures. In fact, she has made it very clear that she 'will not permit anyone to spy' upon her. The teachers, therefore, have nothing to do with her; she avoids them and doesn't talk to any of them. Latterly she has been observed to talk to herself. She has acted as though oblivious of other persons in the room. When I spoke to her last week, she told me to mind my own business and called me names I do not care to repeat . . . It is no longer safe to have her in the building; anything may happen."

Miss Farmer claimed that a cold kept her from going to the school doctor. The doctor called on her. "A head covered with a scarf," he reported, "appeared at a closed window and demanded my business. She insisted on identification, which I made with the official badge of the Department and supplemented at her request with my automobile license." The doctor found nothing to justify Miss Farmer's absence from school.

The psychiatrist encountered similar difficulties in reaching Miss Farmer. To him she seemed "co-operative, but indifferent and apathetic." As he continued to seek the cause of her trouble, she suddenly cried: "Why do you come here to ask a lot of silly questions? I won't answer another question. So get out! Leave me alone. I don't bother you, and don't you bother me, you red-faced son-of-a-bitch! Get out!"

The psychiatrist identified himself to Miss Farmer's neighbor, who said: "She is a hermit. She keeps the shades drawn all day, and very seldom goes out. A couple of years ago, when we passed on the street, we would nod and exchange greetings, but for the past 2 years she just looked down at the pavement and paid no attention to me. Hers is a mystery house. I never see a soul visit her. She keeps the lights burning all night. All of us around here think she is wacky. We wonder how she has managed to keep on teaching so long."

Diagnosis: "Marked schizoid personality . . . a true schizo-

phrenia with fundamental mechanism, the introversion of the personality and withdrawal from reality . . . She has undergone deterioration, and the whole symptom complex is now disabling and precludes her from functioning as a teacher."

Alice Farmer refused to appear before the Retirement Board. She was retired.

Those who divide men into two main classes, the extrovert and the introvert, find nothing necessarily wrong with either class. And, of course, in everyone the desire to be alone is as strong, if not quite so frequent, as the love of company and companionship. It is only when either of these seems excessive that it is of concern. The habitually withdrawn person, under consideration now, is likely to shrink from others because she is timid, fearful, self-conscious, unable to function easily or speak fluently in a group.

One can have only the deepest sympathy for a teacher who has given years of conscientious and effective service, who has undoubtedly had a good influence upon the pupils, but whose classes begin to complain. This was the situation in the case of William White, a 56-year-old successful and always Satisfactory teacher of mathematics in a western state. After 20 years of service, he received one rating of Unsatisfactory and was transferred. The new principal, asked as a matter of routine to report on the newly transferred teacher, declared that Mr. White was "frigidly uncooperative" and insisted on being treated "according to psychology." In speech, however, he "shows great tractability, a deference beyond need to his principal, and a good attitude toward his pupils and his colleagues." He was pleasant but wanted to be left alone.

When Mr. White was observed by the assistant-to-principal and his chairman, "the conduct of his students was such as to indicate that the teacher was exercising adequate class control . . . For a teacher who has been in the classroom as long as he has, however,

he shows need for improvement in some elementary teaching skills directly related to his own subject area . . . Under supervision, he can generally teach a fair lesson, but on unexpected visits he performs poorly. This is a repetition of the old story: he can do well when he wants to, but he doesn't always want to."

This final remark seems psychologically uninformed, if not uncharitable. Every teacher *wants* to do a good job, if only for the selfish reason that an orderly and properly active class is more satisfied and less of a strain on the teacher.

More frequent observations of Mr. White, unannounced and unexpected, disclosed a sorrier situation:

"On December 13, I noticed that Mr. White's class was sitting idle while the teacher stood at the front of the room, arms folded, watching the class. He informed me that he had presented a topic and had given the students some homework to complete. In the back of the room, near the window aisle, a large pile of torn newspapers had been heaped; in the remainder of the room there was evidence that a wholesale tearing of paper had taken place. The teacher admitted that he had noticed the condition, that several students were responsible, and that the class wouldn't work and was difficult to control . . .

"On December 15, I noticed an odor of smoke in the corridor. The odor was traced to Mr. White's room; he said he was unaware of any smoke odor. We discovered charred and burned paper in a desk at the back of his room . . .

"On December 17, I observed that while Mr. White was busily presenting a topic, the 23 members of the class were engaged in various activities, with only a few paying any attention to the teacher. I picked out two students in the rear of the room gambling with cards and money; at least five were reading newspapers in plain view of the teacher; two others sat with their backs turned to him. The teacher seemed entirely unconcerned with the inattention of the students. He seemed utterly oblivious of what was going on. He even seemed to be in a state of bewilderment

and confusion and didn't know what was going on. Perhaps he is sick."

The report continued, less generously: "I have discussed these incidents with Mr. White, at the time of occurrence as well as on other occasions in a general manner, and he has frequently expressed the view that his students are merely waiting to leave school, are so badly retarded that they cannot learn the subject, or are so unco-operative that there is little sense in his devoting much attention to them. 'I am all right,' he says; 'the kids are no good.'

"From my observation, this negative attitude is repaid in full by the students' attitude toward the teacher and by their undesirable activities in class. He is permitting his feelings toward the students to influence his instruction to an extent bordering on neglect of duty."

Mr. White's chairman was asked to submit monthly reports of the teacher's work. This seemed to be the last straw. When the chairman suggested that Mr. White try to relax more in class, the teacher began "a tirade with increasing emotional overtones and rising intensity of pitch and loudness of voice. Once wound up, he was practically impossible to stop. He said he had gotten in touch with the district leader, and would fight this matter 'up and down the line.'"

Mr. White's supervisors seem to have taken his reflections upon the students at face value. It appears not to have occurred to them that he was externalizing a sense of guilt, blaming the students instead of admitting an inefficiency he vaguely felt within himself. There are doubtless some teachers who, like persons in every field, hate their work. But when a long record of success is followed by dissatisfaction, distaste, and blame put upon "the system" or the pupils, there is reason to probe more deeply into the teacher's state of mind.

The superintendent, also dropping in unannounced, was more discerning. He reported: "Having observed a great many cases

of mental deterioration in teachers past middle age, I must come to the conclusion that the scope of Mr. White's attention has narrowed to such a degree that sometimes the entire class can be in disorder and he goes on blissfully teaching." He added that he would like to be present when the teacher meets the Retirement Committee, for "Mr. White makes out a very good case for himself. He is also able, when observers enter his room, to pull himself together and do a passable job."

The psychiatric report noted that the teacher was well oriented. "His conceptual quotient was at a high level. His vocabulary is better than average for people of college level . . . There was no primary deviation of mood. There was no patent anxiety . . . The teacher is friendly."

Permitted by the Retirement Committee to continue teaching, Mr. White had increasing difficulty with his classes, until the principal sent in an emergency appeal, declaring that he was fearful of what might happen at any time. The psychiatrist now found "pathology of the small arterial vessels of the retinae . . . strong presumptive evidence of corresponding pathology in the small capillaries and arterioles of the brain . . . The intervals between attacks are usually characterized by retrospective insight or a dim awareness that 'something is wrong.' Mr. White puts it: 'Maybe I'm sick, or tired, or not so good as I used to be.' *Diagnosis:* cerebral arteriosclerosis, with transitory psychotic episodes (paranoid features). *Prognosis:* This man will gradually or rapidly get worse."

Before the Retirement Committee, "Nothing was revealed to justify a recommendation for retirement." However, on the basis of the school, medical, and psychiatric reports, William White was retired.

The withdrawn teacher, like Mr. White, sunken in brooding self-concern, may seem, to the untrained supervisor, quite capable of effective work in the classroom. For brief periods, when she is being observed, she can pull herself out of her preoccupations

and her private world, and convey the impression of normal functioning. In most cases, by the time the higher authorities are called upon and can act, the deterioration and the withdrawal are prominent and permanent, and the illness has left its baneful impress on the children.

When a teacher strictly minds her own business, there seems an almost endless fund of patience in a principal. The principal's time is taken with many things. The smooth functioning of a school of a thousand or more children requires constant attention to countless details. Problems of building maintenance, of school organization, of pupil discipline, of parental concern, of keeping the teachers satisfied, demand so much time and mental strain that if a teacher can keep order and can function in a class, the principal breathes a sigh of relief. She may be "a queer one," but she is not a bother. Only the children are deeply bothered, perhaps for many years.

Thus for over a quarter of a century Miss Gertrude Polen went on teaching German in a midwestern high school. Her story came to light because, after 2 years in another high school, she was being retransferred to the school where she had done her major work. She had always been rated Satisfactory at that school, but now from its principal came an angry blast: to return her to his school "is courting disaster . . . She never associated with the other teachers; she made herself most unpopular with them all. She had not one friend on the teaching staff. She quarreled with her colleagues, called them names, wrote them abusive letters, spat in their faces. She would walk up and down the hall past the teachers' room, calling out such things as 'Trash! Trash!' as she passed the door. The teachers all say she had a very unwholesome influence on the girls . . . As this school suffered from Miss Polen's condition for more than 25 years, it hardly seems right that she should be returned to us now."

It was then—after 29 years!—that Miss Polen was called for a

psychiatric examination. To the psychiatrist, she stated that when she had first come to that school another teacher had circulated a story about her, saying: "She's not her father's daughter, she's his wife." The psychiatrist inquired: "Are you attached to your father?" She replied: "Yes, in a filial way."

She also told of a family that had lived in the apartment beneath hers, all ardent members of "The Church of the Holy Flirtation, of which she could, however, remember no details. She had not joined the church, but had given several donations."

The School Board, it now appeared, had an extensive file on Miss Polen, which revealed a queer mélange of religious and sexual aberration. For instance:

"Strangers in a bus pointed at me and said: 'She is a Jew-hater; she has an interest in a restricted community in the mountains.' . . .

"Mr. Grote said: 'You are more sinned against than sinning, Frau.' Think of it, he called me Frau! I was never married nor husbanded . . .

"Miss Symes said I was a prostitute. What an idea! I am no party girl . . .

"Here in America all doors to promotion are open to Jews and closed to Americans. It's an international educational Communist plot. It's treachery, guillotinery, butchery, sadism—an orgy of mob rule. True Americans are liquidated . . .

"I am no bar girl. I never pick up chance acquaintances. So what's wrong with me? . . .

"Many of the boys in my class are girl-mad. One of the boys gave a girl 25 cents to let him touch her privates. Why should a boy want to touch a girl's privates? . . .

"Why has my school such a large percentage of Jewish teachers? . . .

"My principal? There are obscene drawings with his name attached. Angry parents call him a son-of-a-bitch . . ."

To her principal, before her original transfer, Miss Polen had

written: "I am an eyesore to you and so are you to me. You ask me to get a transfer. Why don't you get a transfer? You were reared in the Ghetto. You're no educator. You're a gangster and a racketeer. You're a bully and a politician and a dirty foreigner."

We do not wonder why the principal did not welcome Miss Polen back. We do wonder, though, why he stood for her abuse so long. He had always marked her Satisfactory.

The Retirement Committee, also, wondered. After the diagnosis of schizophrenia, and Miss Polen's retirement, the Committee recommended that a notice be sent to all school heads, directing their attention:

1. to the importance of promptly reporting teachers who are physically or mentally disabled;

2. to the provision in the Bylaws that requires a principal to "report immediately . . . a teacher or a supervisor in his school who in his judgment has been unduly absent, negligent, insubordinate, incompetent or inefficient in respect to instruction, discipline, or supervision, guilty of conduct unbecoming a teacher or prejudicial to the good order, efficiency, or discipline of the service, or whose mental or physical condition is apparently such as to render him unfit for service."

This comprehensive list of reasons for reporting a teacher is still frequently ignored, through ignorance, through mistaken kindness, or through unwillingness to face trouble. "Why should I stick my neck out?" one principal asked. A more representative response came from Principal Robert Orth when he was asked by a Minnesota school board why he had not reported a certain teacher sooner. He replied: "I am not a psychiatrist. I did all I could to help her. She was not too bad before, though she was never a good teacher. But conditions in her class became so bad of late that I had to report her. It was not a pleasant thing to do, and some of my teachers are very critical of me for reporting her. But I am responsible for the children and I did my duty—maybe

a little late, but no one can say that I didn't give her time or that I acted hastily."

Something more, however, may be said in explanation of the delay in detecting mental illness. Psychiatrists may protest against such delay, when they see the record; but their own difficulties in diagnosis show why the lay supervisor's judgment may well be deferred. At a conference of over 100 psychiatrists, at Creedmoor State Mental Hospital, on May 27, 1960, the point was made that treatment of schizophrenics has much more favorable prospects if started in the first year. A psychiatrist at once queried: "When does the first year start? Is it at the time of the doctor's diagnosis? Or at some point perhaps 10 years before, when the family first noted something odd in the patient's behavior?"

It became evident from the discussion that whereas in some cases there is a sharp "break" between the normal and the recognizably schizoid personality, a sudden or acute onset that can be called the beginning of the disease, actually in most cases the onset is more unnoticed and insidious. The gradual deterioration is almost imperceptible from stage to stage, but it eventually results in a wholly incompetent personality. It may be as hard to detect, by those who see the person almost daily, as growth in physical height. Some psychiatrists believe that even in such gradually developing cases, a "good history" will enable them to detect a precise moment, a psychotic "break," that divides the normal from the ill. Such dubious discriminations are beyond the scope of the educational supervisor. And this "insidious onset" helps to explain why teachers may continue in classroom service for years, gradually growing more and more unfit to guide children, before a critical action, often outside the classroom, draws public and official attention to them and forces their retirement.

The troubles of Edith Schiller in a midwestern high school are of a familiar pattern, indicating this gradual deterioration,

and the long-suffering patience of the principal. Aged 52, Miss Schiller had been transferred eight times in her 30 years of Satisfactory teaching of French and German. When the Second World War came, she developed the feeling that she was being persecuted because of her German birth. She began to lose control of her classes; she grew increasingly emotional until she seemed to reach hysterical agitation. She often left her class to lie down in the school infirmary, and moan and weep. She spoke to her chairman of intending to "end it all," and finally she just stayed home from school.

Although Miss Schiller was given her first Unsatisfactory rating just before her transfer to Richfield High School, her new principal wrote: "Neither Miss Carton, Chairman of the Department of Modern Languages, nor I can declare Miss Schiller's class work Unsatisfactory on the basis of the visits we have made—covering, for each of us, nearly all the classes on her program for at least one full period's visit each . . . There have been good order, apparent attention, and work accomplished . . . Miss Schiller is easily deflected from essentials; she does not always have a well-rounded lesson; she is not a stimulating teacher—but the net result of her teaching could not be called Unsatisfactory."

There were matters outside the class, however, that concerned the principal. He enumerated twelve, from which we select but three:

"1. A volunteer job, arranging for the delivery of a daily paper as an accommodation to teachers, brought phone calls requesting payment, and finally a collector.

"2. A check cashed as a courtesy by the school treasurer was returned marked 'No funds.' After two weeks, Miss Schiller asked him to cash a larger check to cover the first and give her the balance. She thought his refusal very ungracious.

"3. She grows increasingly insistent that she is being persecuted; I cannot disabuse her of the idea; and her emotional outbursts of weeping grow more frequent. Recently, on Parents'

Night, after most of the parents and teachers had gone home, Miss Schiller remained, hysterically accusing the administrative assistant and others of persecution. It took over 20 minutes to calm her, and we were actually afraid to let her go home alone . . .

"The items above, looked at on paper, seem trivial and unimportant, and I feel petty in listing them. They are, however, indicative of the problems we are constantly faced with in our efforts to help Miss Schiller to do her work and to maintain cooperative relations with pupils, parents, teachers, and the school administrators. It is with regret, and with great sympathy for Miss Schiller, that I am submitting this report."

When Miss Schiller stayed home, she wrote a letter to the principal expressing her concern as to how her pupils might fare on the coming examination. Here is part of the principal's reply:

"I think you can teach effectively if you want to. Under the stimulation of direct supervision, you do. I think, however, while I discount the complaints of the girls, that to some extent you have personality traits that antagonize the children and also make it difficult for administrators to work with you." (He specifies six such traits.)

"I am confident that in this school you have had kindness, consideration, and help to a marked degree . . . I think it is time that you forget past situations that hurt or distressed you, and that you try to correct the weaknesses that make your work ineffective.

"It is important that you use all your time and strength for your major job. I do not know whether you are doing too much work outside school that makes you appear so pressed and tired, but certainly in dealing with high-school girls you must be physically rested and well adjusted if you are to be effective.

"I trust that you will realize I am trying to help you, however inept I may be in expressing my real concern."

The psychiatrist found "no clearly formulated paranoid ideas"

but a "sensitive personality; psychoneurosis." Miss Edith Schiller was retired.

The sympathetic concern of the principal for Miss Schiller's well-being is exemplary. One wonders, nevertheless, whether an earlier call for help might not have saved a teacher, as well as spared the parents and children their discomforts and antagonisms. Miss Schiller was transferred with all her problems from school to school; eight principals sympathetically foisted the burden of her troubles upon other shoulders, before the ninth asked the superintendent to intervene.

Sometimes principals are not so patient as were Miss Schiller's. Seemingly harsh speed, however, may be the more beneficial procedure. It quickly removes any danger from the children. And for the teacher, immediate attention may lead to a cure of what otherwise often results in an irreversible and irremediable mental illness.

Miss Anna Simm, aged 51, had 25 years of Satisfactory service as a high-school teacher of applied design. She had an accident in school, was examined by the school physician, and her absence with pay was approved. She requested a second medical examination; this time, her conversation seemed strange, and the doctor suggested a psychiatric interview.

The psychiatrist, in two examinations, found Miss Simm resentful and hostile—except that at times her rambling remarks grew flirtatious. For instance, at one point she said: "I must make my Spring coat and the School Board takes all my spare time with these examinations. I think the Board is persecuting me—you can quote me. I would like to know why I have to go to the doctors. You're very darling. I wish I knew you some other way. I'm old enough and I know life . . ." Miss Simm was returned to her classes.

The principal found that her work deteriorated. He stated to her: "In repeated visits to your room I have failed to find any

contact with reality, even to the meager extent of using samples of materials. The girls continue to use mere words and if any of them can as much as identify any textiles at sight, it is not because of any experiences they have had in your class. In view of the fact that the girls wear clothing to school, it would not even be necessary for them to take the trouble to bring any samples."

The assistant superintendent also submitted a long report on his observations of Miss Simm, concluding that her teaching was Unsatisfactory. The Retirement Board, nevertheless, sent her back again to the classroom, recommending that she be closely observed. The reports of the principal and of her chairman continued Unsatisfactory. Their conclusions ran: "Miss Simm is resentful of observation and suggestions . . . She is nervous and domineering and the children resent her. When she cannot have her way, even in trifles, she flies into a tantrum in front of the class . . . She hurts and resents children . . . She is not temperamentally suited to teaching." For all these conclusions, substantiating details were presented.

Called again before the Retirement Committee, Miss Simm bowed her head as the principal spoke: "I have the responsibility of the supervision of a large school, 3800 pupils, a faculty of 140. My time is limited. Much of it during the last few months has been consumed by this teacher and her problems. I have conferred with her twelve times, with her sister twice, with her head of department eight times, and on innumerable occasions with pupils, parents, school counselors and school clerks who have complained about her. She clogs the machinery. She is undoubtedly ill, but we have neither the ability, the time, nor the facilities to cure her of whatever her ailment is. I am in charge of a school, not a sanitarium. A school such as mine, or any school for that matter, must have teachers who are well adjusted and mentally and socially competent."

The assistant superintendent had written to Miss Simm: "The

solution of your difficulty resides in your constant effort to improve, and in your receptivity to suggestions. I am certain that you can have the assistance of your chairman and principal in daily planning, in the art of questioning, in formulating aims, and in developing units of work. They are ready to guide and to counsel you." The psychiatrist had concluded: "If I had to venture a diagnosis and prognosis at this time, it would be 'mild paranoid reaction, expected duration uncertain, expected course unpredictable.' There is a possibility of spontaneous improvement in this disturbance." On the basis of the principal's speech, however, the Retirement Committee unanimously voted that Miss Anna Simm be retired.

Here there are special elements to ponder. The words of the assistant superintendent and of the psychiatrist indicate that a sympathetic heart and understanding guidance might have enabled Miss Simm to function effectively in the classroom. Her chance for well-being and future good work was denied her because the endurance of her principal had reached its limit. Perhaps Miss Simm deserved dismissal; but perhaps her principal deserved a course in human relations. "She clogs the machinery." His words sound as though a human being had been cast aside for a machine.

The withdrawn person, as we have seen, often gives glimpses of a covert hostility; in more forthright personalities the hostility may be manifest.

Kathryn Lardon, retired for disability, had applied for re-examination and was restored to service in another school. She had taught home economics in a southern high school for 23 Satisfactory years.

At the end of her first term in the new school, her principal hesitated but finally reported her service as Satisfactory, in the hope that it would improve. In the second term Miss Lardon's chairman, Miss Knowland, reported that the teacher was unco-

operative, very hostile, and derelict in her duties. Miss Lardon retorted that Miss Knowland had been unfriendly from the start, made unreasonable demands, and encouraged the pupils to tattle. Twice Miss Lardon came to the principal, saying that Miss Knowland had given her unreasonable assignments to prepare examination questions. The principal told her the assignments were routine and fair. Miss Lardon then called Miss Knowland a liar and a leader of spies. She stated that Miss Knowland had turned off the refrigerator in the cooking classroom and allowed her hardening jello to melt, that Miss Knowland had put a can of food in the trash basket under Miss Lardon's desk, where it had become rancid.

The principal, passing Miss Lardon's room, dropped in when he saw four young men, two in uniform, whom he had just refused visitors' passes, in the front of the room. They were telling the girls about cooking in the Army.

A week later, seven girls from Miss Lardon's class went to the principal's office. They complained that she often blamed the wrong pupils for misbehavior; that whatever they cooked according to her instructions "turns out bad and burnt"; that when they asked her why, she said: "I'm busy!" Miss Lardon, questioned, called the girls liars and troublemakers, and asked the principal what business he had listening to and believing such stories.

The principal listed other stories of hostility, of angry clashes between Miss Lardon and other teachers and girls. One girl came to the office with three long scratches on her arm; she had told Miss Lardon she was *not* talking out of turn.

Sent to the school psychiatrist, Miss Lardon said that, although the principal had often praised her, now he was reversing himself. As for the teachers she had had quarrels with, the doctor stated: "She reacts with the impression that they are all wrong and she is right." On the recommendation of the psychiatrist, Miss Lardon was transferred to another school.

At the end of the next term, she was again before the psychia-

trist, who wrote: "This patient's attitude at first was pleasant, but it changed markedly to one of aggressiveness, resentment, and denial of all wrong. Her principal, the chairman, the director of home economics, the girls who had complained, were all liars and skunks and spies . . . I asked: If she were an employer and did not like the work of an employee, would she discharge that employee regardless of what he thought of himself? She answered 'Yes.' When I then asked whether her employer could discharge her if he considered her work unsatisfactory, she said 'No. I don't care what he thinks; I know I'm a good teacher.' The teacher left in anger, insisting that I had no right to believe all these 'crazy accusations' against her. Her behavior is one of paranoid reaction . . . It must be mentioned that in this type of mental disorder a patient may strike many people as normal."

Miss Kathryn Lardon was retired.

Withdrawal into oneself may take the form of resentment of those who would draw one out. Of course, a teacher should be outgoing, outgiving, sharing experiences with the children. Even in other phases of school activity, such as the library, there should be a pleasant desire to help, a readiness to join in the experience of learning. This emotional communion is wholesome and inspiriting. Where it is lacking, questions as to the worth of the teacher's work arise.

Miss Ruth Marr had served as a northwestern school librarian for 34 Satisfactory years. Then the principal asked that she be examined, stating:

"She persists in needlessly antagonizing students and teachers by fighting with them. She sits rigidly at her desk, saying 'I'm busy' to all pupils that seek information. She does not circulate to check talking and avert disorder before it begins. She does not give the 5-minute warning, therefore dismissal is a disorderly rout. *This is typical of her work for at least 10 years.*" He added

that her cataloguing was so inaccurate that she had been relieved of that duty; that her shelf-listing records were so confused that most books could not be located by number but had to be hunted for; and that she was constantly quarreling with students because she could not keep straight her records of overdue books.

This situation might have gone on for another 10 years, if Miss Marr had not thrown a pack of library cards in a teacher's face. It was on this teacher's insistent complaint that the principal filed his request for an examination.

Miss Marr's explanation to the psychiatrist seemed quite reasonable to the librarian. The teacher at whom she had thrown the cards had smiled and mentioned Mr. Wood.

"Who is Mr. Wood?" the psychiatrist asked. It developed that 10 years before, Miss Marr had thought she was nearing a nervous breakdown, and her doctor had "forced her" to have sexual relations with one of the faculty. That one was Mr. Wood. She had gone to the doctor in the summer, away from home, on a visit to New York; but, she added, "I think the doctor must have told some relatives here about it, and that's how word got to the school." After that, she complained, all the teachers made underhand and mean allusions to the episode. One woman teacher gave her the key to the men's lavatory, saying: "Women use it now."

After vainly trying to check her "often incoherent ramblings," the psychiatrist concluded: "It appears that Miss Marr has been a schizoid person most of her life. She has definite paranoid delusions and ideas of reference. She annoys members of the faculty with voluminous notes, letters, and literature that appear bizarre. She is increasingly hostile, and the possibility of injury to both students and faculty must be seriously considered. *Diagnosis:* schizophrenic reaction, paranoid type. Prognosis poor." Miss Marr asked the Retirement Board whether she was being tried for a "sex experience" she was "forced into" and never wanted. When

informed that the incident was not on file and was not the point at issue, she said "I don't believe that. Examine your own lives."

Miss Ruth Marr was retired.

A teacher withdrawn into her own concerns can hardly be an active and wholesome guide for children. She may be able to maintain the motions of classroom management and work, but her own lack of interest must communicate itself to the children. If in her withdrawal the teacher builds hostility toward those who would intrude upon or rouse her from her private inner life, this antagonism will break out in even more harmful classroom behavior. Whenever and however a teacher is disturbed, the immediate sufferers are the children.

7

Sense of Persecution

CLOSELY ASSOCIATED with the impulse toward withdrawal, but more symptomatic of deeper disorders, are continuing and unwarranted suspicion and sense of persecution. Most suspicion in the schools is unwarranted, for teachers and supervisors in general are working for the good of the children and for harmony in the faculty; and while children as individuals may be ready for mischief or disorderly conduct, they seldom form "conspiracies" to destroy a teacher's peace of mind.

Suspicion that one is being persecuted tends to arise when one is unable to cope with external pressures. One seeks, of course, to maintain one's self-esteem. To this end, one transforms the actual pressures into unreal but even greater pressures, such as no competent person could adequately withstand. Thus the individual preserves his sense of his own proper functioning, but spreads around him an aura of suspicion. Major forces, which no one man could overcome, are conspiring to beat him down.

Suspicion, once generated, may seize upon any innocent word or act. Personal and invidious interpretations may be attached to general and well-intentioned remarks. Even the absence of action can be misinterpreted. Failure to speak may be taken to mean that a colleague or a supervisor is ignoring or slighting the aggrieved teacher. If conditions remain as they are, does not their failure to change prove that someone is working against the teacher, preventing her from winning recognition or the promo-

tion she desires and deserves? Thus suspicion distorts all things to justify its existence.

One teacher said that her assistant principal, "who is beneath me in every way, is doing everything she can to hurt me and to prevent me from getting a principal's license." Another declared that she had struck a child "because she is inciting the other children to make life miserable for me." Such remarks may be isolated aberrations. Some of them may even be true. But a continuing attitude of suspicion, directed against various persons, should cause the teacher's supervisors considerable concern.

In some instances, the suspicions are centered upon a single individual, usually the principal or assistant principal, who is viewed, because of jealousy or ambition, as persecuting the teacher, whose virtues outshine the supervisor's or who is otherwise an obstacle in his path. In a second sort of aberrant fixed idea, the whole faculty, and perhaps the children as well, may be imagined as joined in conspiracy against the teacher. There are, thirdly, teachers whose suspicions spread beyond the school to the neighborhood, who find "mysterious forces" from outside conspiring to drive them from the school, if not to destroy them. Fourthly, there are even some who see the conspiracy against them as worldwide, either as part of an international plot or as a concentration of an international body upon the individual teacher. From the many teachers who have been overwhelmed by this sense of persecution, examples of each of these four types will be selected.

Genevieve Keene had been rated Satisfactory through 35 years of service in a southwestern state, although the superintendent's note adds: "uninspired, traditional, mediocre; follows minimum of form and less of spirit of current elementary school program . . . Rarely are standards and requirements modified to meet individual needs."

Mrs. Keene was brought to official attention by the complaints of several parents, who claimed that her language and tone were

unreasonable, discourteous, abusive, and at times explosive. She would shout at them, with recriminations and sarcastic remarks about both the parents and their children. To the principal she denied this, but "with almost hysterical outbursts and discourtesy that bordered on insubordination"; the principal decided to have no more parents talk with Mrs. Keene.

He had to send for her, however, when two indignant parents reported that she had savagely struck their child. Mrs. Keene denied this, angrily telling the parents that they were overprotective and that their child needed a psychiatrist's care. Mrs. Keene was sent to the school psychiatrist.

To him she said: "There is a feud in the school. We have a new principal, Mr. Henry. He wanted to change my room. But the room he wanted to send me to was the one I was in when I lost my mother and father within a period of 4 months. He assigned me to it anyway. I 'phoned the district superintendent, who told Mr. Henry to put me back in the other room. Mr. Henry exclaimed: 'What will I tell the other teacher?' He was afraid to lose face. And since then it's been nothing but pick, pick, pick."

Mrs. Keene further accused the principal of encouraging parents who came to complain about her. To be ready for the interview with the school psychiatrist she had gone to an outside psychiatrist, whom she quoted as saying there was nothing wrong with her. "Dr. Fine said I was the usual run of teacher—a hellcat."

As the school psychiatrist continued to probe her relationship with her principal, Mrs. Keene insisted that she was being persecuted. She denied ever having struck any of the 14 children listed in the complaint. The psychiatrist declared: "It is quite apparent that when this teacher becomes upset, she is capable of indulging in assaultive behavior. She clenched her fists and grated her teeth when she said Mr. Henry was out to get her, and she swore he'd have a fight on his hands if he thought he was going to get away with it . . . It is my opinion that Mrs. Keene is

suffering from a paranoid condition directed especially toward the principal of her school."

Before the Retirement Committee Mrs. Genevieve Keene remained sullen, rigid, and constantly hostile. She was retired.

While an unfortunate teacher may concentrate her accusations on the principal, more are likely to spread their suspicions over the entire faculty, seeing colleagues as well as supervisors joined in the persecution. Samuel Barr, aged 46, had taught in a Great Lakes elementary school through 24 Satisfactory years. He came to official attention when an attendance officer, checking on another child, found one of Mr. Barr's boys at home. The attendance officer filled out a truancy slip for the boy. Thereupon Mr. Barr went to the principal, complaining that the school's teacher in charge of attendance was spying on him. When the attendance officer explained that he himself had made out the slip after he had accidentally encountered the boy, Mr. Barr went into a tantrum, accusing the teacher and the principal of "ganging up" on him.

This incident disturbed the principal, who began to investigate Mr. Barr's attitude in the school. Three other teachers said he had accused them of "snitching on him." Several teachers asserted that pupils had complained to them that Mr. Barr constantly questioned them to elicit what other teachers might be saying about him. The teachers declared that this had been going on for several years. The principal then recommended a psychiatric examination.

Mr. Barr applied for a sabbatical leave. The psychiatrist reported: "He seems to be an alert, conscientious, well-informed, rather sensitive type of personality. He is an experienced teacher who has apparently developed an anxiety state of moderate character. However, the anxiety seems to be of long standing . . . I suggest a psychiatric check-up at the termination of his leave of absence."

Mr. Barr remained out of school while awaiting the decision on his sabbatical leave. He was summoned for a second psychiatric examination. There, he declared: "I am a good mixer; I am very much sought after. I am quite gregarious; I am out to help people. I liked teaching until this term. My principal is not the supervisor for me. I tried to co-operate with him, but he took advantage of my good nature." The report continued: "Mr. Barr manifested a general mood of euphoria. He is of the egomanic type, with flight from reality. He was overproductive in speech with a tendency to flight of ideas. Brought back to the attitude of the principal, he said: 'I am now on the defense. I have to protect myself against my enemies. My principal said to me: "You'll have your leave of absence over my dead body." He encouraged snitching, enlisted the other teachers against me. When I complained, he publicized it and spread it through the faculty. Everybody knew that the way to please the principal was to pick on me.'

"At this point, Mr. Barr became very emotional, and wept. When he recovered control, he went on about the principal: 'He is the very core of the plot. He goes around snooping and snitching. He wants me to be his River Ganges; why should he throw all his troubles on me?'

"Mr. Barr," the psychiatrist concluded, "is suffering from a paranoid condition, of the expansive and persecutory type, progressive and incurable."

Mr. Samuel Barr was unanimously retired. He is another teacher whose condition had produced no open disturbance in the classroom. There was no question but that he could manage a class. There was also no question but that he was unfit to teach.

Beyond the faculty are the parents, who have properly come to take a greater interest in the schools, with the formation of parents' organizations, especially the widespread Parent-Teachers Association, familiarly known as the PTA. In most schools such

an organization is welcomed, and often made an effective arm of the educational process. At the same time, it provides an object on which to center a complaining teacher's remarks. It then becomes a scapegoat for a teacher seeking something to blame for "interference" with classroom activity, and unfortunately it is a convenient peg for an aberrant sense of persecution.

Miss Lillian Lukes, aged 48, had been rated Satisfactory throughout her 28 years of teaching in New Jersey. She came to official attention when Mrs. Friego, President of the school's PTA, whose daughter was in Miss Lukes' class, complained to the principal. Mrs. Friego charged that a girl in the class had had dirty water poured down her back, that two boys had set fire to a pile of papers in the back of the room without incurring any reprimand, that personal property of the pupils was constantly being stolen, and that often the disorder was so great she was fearful for the physical safety of the children.

The principal verified these complaints. He also was perturbed to learn that Miss Lukes would announce to the class things he had told her in confidence. For instance, Miss Lukes had Mrs. Friego's daughter read aloud the principal's note about Mrs. Friego's visit, and then assigned as homework composition the topic: "What I think of the PTA." The principal requested an examination.

To the psychiatrist, Miss Lukes declared that she was an idol in the neighborhood; if she left the school, the neighborhood would riot. She added: "But that doesn't mean the PTA should run the school. My school is run by the PTA. You know what that means? Mrs. A says to Mrs. B that Mrs. C puts too much sugar in her tea and gossip and slander. That's what a PTA means."

She recalled an incident when an earlier principal had questioned her about circulating some literature about birth control among her 12-year-old pupils. She admitted that it had been passed around among the children but denied any responsibility,

saying a member of the PTA must have thrown it in her waste-basket after a meeting. "Why," she protested, "the children even whisper to one another that Miss Lukes knows nothing about sex!" The psychiatrist declared that Miss Lukes had been ill for several years. *"Diagnosis:* A chronic psychoneurosis mixed type, with anxiety and neurasthenic features in a schizoid setting and paranoid schizophrenia."

Before the Retirement Board Miss Lukes' still youthful features were marred with bitterness. She considered herself quite superior, and launched into a lengthy and repetitive harangue, of which this is the essence: "The trouble is with the PTA. The principal and the teachers are afraid of them. They are nothing but a bunch of lazy gossiping busybodies who are made to feel important by weak school supervision. I can't understand why people make such a fuss over a lot of ignorant parents. In some schools they tell teachers what to teach. In the swanky neighborhoods, the women belong to the public school PTA but send their children to private schools. If I were the principal I wouldn't allow a parent to come into the school. Let the parent attend to his business and I'll attend to mine. If it weren't for busybody parents I wouldn't be here now!"

Miss Lukes, thanks more to the concern of "busybody parents" than to the watchfulness of her principal, was retired.

When the sense of persecution is unchecked, it seems to gather momentum and to widen its range. Not only the school officials and the parents, but "mysterious forces" center upon the innocent and long-suffering teacher. Since such teachers are usually eager to discuss their persecuted lot, it is surprising how many of them continue teaching, without psychiatric inquiry, until other circumstances call them to official attention. There may be an act of violence by the teacher, against a parent or a pupil "involved in the plot," or there may be such a brooding upon the supposed wrongs that the teacher cannot concentrate on her teaching, or

even control the class. By that time, the teacher's condition has in most cases deteriorated beyond hope of recovery.

Miss Jennie Smith, aged 48, had 15 years of Satisfactory teaching in a middle-Atlantic city. This term her class was giving her serious disciplinary problems, and the superintendent came to a conference with her in her principal's office. There she declared: "There is a great network carrying on an organized program of sabotage. Outsiders, as well as teachers and children, are involved. I have been aware of outside influences for 3 years, but an open conspiracy began to work this September." The report continued: "Miss Smith went on to say that the disturbance among the children was adult-planned and adult-instigated; adults in the neighborhood are in league with the teachers. These adults are being misled. The underlying motive is to get Miss Smith to leave the school . . . Two years ago three of her pupils told her they were offered $1 to destroy the nature corner in her room. They were to get the money from the teacher next door. Miss Smith did not carry the matter further, because she did not want to unleash the full force of the conspiracy . . . The teacher next door, Mrs. Grew, is working with a great network, colored and white. It is a pressure group to cause disturbance. A year ago, in the auditorium, the children in the plot had kept on murmuring 'Zoom! Zoom! Zoom!' all the time the former principal was speaking. They succeeded in getting that principal transferred.

"Miss Smith feels that the school wants teachers who have applied pressure to be appointed. She also feels there is a prejudice against university graduates . . . She likes the children in her class, and they like her. It is the outside influence that turns them against her. Cynthia is a good girl; she doesn't know who incited Cynthia; but the other day Cynthia said: 'Why don't you get out of the school as they want?' And Reginald. 'Reginald has been trying actively to get the other children to misbehave. When they get excited, then he does his own work properly; his mission is accomplished' . . ."

The psychiatrist raised the question of a transfer out of the neighborhood; Miss Smith said that the same forces would operate anywhere. The former principal, she declared, was a victim of the same machinations. "I am not a vengeful person," she declared. "I am only interested in having injustice stopped." Miss Smith regarded the psychiatric interview as a conference on how best to stop the persecution. The psychiatrist concluded: "My diagnostic impression is a paranoid state, most probably paranoid schizophrenia. Her family should be informed of her need for treatment."

Before the Retirement Committee, Miss Smith repeated that there was no doubt of the existence of the conspiracy, no doubt whatsoever. To the suggestion that she might be mistaken, she retorted angrily: "You may dismiss me—that's what they've wanted from the very beginning—but I won't lie."

Three years later the Superintendent received from a State mental hospital a long and rambling letter, which said in part: "According to the platform of the Republican Party to which our governor firmly adheres: All American citizens are entitled to full impartial enforcement of federal laws relating to their civil rights. I call upon you to notify the governor immediately, because of the limitations of your position, that as I heard via radio Senator Lodge's broadcast statement to the delegates at the Convention, 'You cannot repudiate 25 Republican governors of 25 states.' I expect release from this institution and restoration of all rights denied me, and compensation on terms that I shall make known, and that July 13 terminates the period in which I have accepted or shall continue to accept service in servitude as my lot, without recourse to Federal enforcement of Federal laws relating to my civil rights.

"Please accept this as notice of my intention.

Very truly yours,

Jennie Smith."

Usually the feeling of persecution builds up through a number of years. At first it is likely to be casual, occasional rather than continuous, felt as coming from an individual rather than a group. If understanding could at this stage bring intelligent treatment, years of distorted classroom attitudes, with their ill effect upon the children, might be averted, and the mental health of the teacher restored. During these early years, however, there may be no violent outbreak, no critical rupture of classroom functioning; the teacher is considered "queer," perhaps, but no one in authority is equipped to recognize the incipient stages of insidious mental disorder. The inner disturbance thus grows undisturbed and the delusions widen, until secret brooding over imaginary grievances bursts into open boil. By then, irreparable damage has been done.

Freda Jung, aged 59, had had 36 years of Satisfactory teaching in a northwestern elementary school. Then the principal reported: "She was a lady of charm and an excellent teacher, but for the past 2 years she has given repeated evidence of great emotional stress. She claims that everyone is against her 'from the custodian up.' This afternoon she came to my assistant's office, banged on the desk, and threatened to bring suit against the teachers who are persecuting her. Then, instead of returning to her class, she retired to the restroom, where she spent the rest of the afternoon. Her class informed me that they feel something must be wrong with their teacher. She told them that their classmate Betty was responsible for her troubles and was being guided by the priest in tormenting her. She begged the children not to listen to Betty, who was a stooge for the Catholic Church. Then she buried her head in her hands and sobbed, begging the children to help her, to save her. The children were sympathetic and told her not to worry. They were orderly, but wondering."

Questioned by the superintendent, Miss Jung declared: "Most of the Catholic teachers have been trying to humiliate me. Not because I am a Catholic, but because of some outside force."

"What is this outside force?"

"The Catholic Church is trying to get me into a convent, and is using this school to train me. It began when I went to a Catholic college about 30 years ago. The same thing went on then. This conspiracy began then and has been getting worse all the time. They are trying to train me to suffer. It got worse in school about 3 years ago. I spoke to my principal then, but he could not stop the teachers. They have orders from outside. They are tightening the noose more and more. Every word is the gospel truth."

"Who do you think is behind all this?"

"It must be someone higher up than the priest. I do not know; it might be the Cardinal."

"Perhaps there isn't any force. Perhaps you're imagining this."

"There's nothing wrong with me mentally, so I can't be mistaken. And it happens wherever I go. It's been set all over the neighborhood. They are all trying to corner me so that in the end I'll be forced to go into a convent."

Before the Retirement Board, Miss Jung declared that she wasn't surprised to be there, because she knew that sooner or later the Church would get her. One of the members of the Board said: "I am Jewish; do you think I am in league with the Catholic Church?"

She replied: "The Catholic Church stops at nothing. I hope they'll be satisfied when they get me into a convent. And why shouldn't you help them? Didn't the Jews crucify Christ? Why shouldn't they crucify me if the Catholic Church wants them to do it? Don't think you can fool me. This has been going on for 30 years."

The psychiatrist diagnosed Freda Jung's illness as paranoia. She was retired, and her family sent her to a mental hospital.

There are teachers whose sense of persecution takes the form of sharp prejudice, which they may mask for a time under various

guises. It came through the pose of forthrightness in Mrs. Hortense Wood, a 32-year-old Satisfactory teacher in a New York junior high school. Reprimanded for calling the children names, she said: "I am a product of pioneer Texas people. I was taught all my life to fight for what I believe to be right . . . What I do in a classroom is no secret . . . When the boys lost self-control I was not ashamed to have you or any other person know it. My object is self-control, not police control. I spoke to those boys the next day, and told them I was not punishing them, because I felt their misdeed carried its own punishment, their loss of self-respect. Then I asked if any boy wanted to admit his error by standing up, and five boys stood. I congratulated them on their courage in admitting their fault."

Mrs. Wood was a substitute, teaching, she insisted, because she liked it and because it was a needed service. "I had no idea of teaching this year; then one night, while glancing through the paper, I saw that several schools were calling for subs. I 'phoned one the next morning, and I've been stuck with it ever since . . . Unless you have 'subbed' as I have, you can't possibly know what goes on in some of the classrooms. A friend of mine was substituting in an English class in a boys' high school. She asked the boys to talk about their favorite activity outside of school. One boy got up and said that his favorite activity was f . . king.

"One of my boys asked me 'What is a coon?' I replied. 'That's the short form of the name of an animal, the raccoon.' He said, 'No. Did you see the picture *The Lost Horizon?*' I said I hadn't, but I imagined that there it was a slang expression for Negro. Another boy asked, casually, 'What does VD stand for?' Just as calmly, I answered: 'VD stands for venereal disease, which one gets from having sexual intercourse with an unclean person.' He turned red and subsided with a sickish smile. If a boy asked me what a penis is, I would explain its dual function with the same calmness as I'd explain why he should wash his hands before eating. I think it's high time kids and parents were set right on

this matter. I call a spade a spade. In talking with one like you [this is to the principal], on my own level, I may use a few 'Hells' and 'Damns,' and one of my choice words for some children is 'Bastard,' said with a beautiful depth of feeling. But the worst I have ever used in a classroom is 'Why the Dickens . . . !' You see, I like kids, good or bad. And they like me . . . This entire system is based on fear, fear, fear. It is everywhere, among teachers, supervisors, children, parents. Your very discipline is based on fear. Can't children here be taught to behave for their own inner satisfaction and self-respect?"

These sentiments might endear Mrs. Wood to the liberal educator. Unfortunately, complaint after complaint continued to come to the principal, that Mrs. Wood had slapped children, had called them "Jackass" and other names, and threatened to slap them again the next day. She struck two boys with a wooden pointer, breaking the wrist watch of one of them. Parents complained that their children, in Mrs. Wood's class, were afraid to return to school.

The principal stopped calling Mrs. Wood for substitute service. When he marked her Unsatisfactory, she appealed. Before the Committee, she became more "forthright" still. "I am a real American," she boasted. "I come from Texas . . . New Yorkers are mainly foreigners—Jews, Polacks, Italians, Irish, Niggers. And good God, the way you treat Niggers beats all hell—you spoil them. Only foreigners coddle Niggers; no real American could . . . Look at this Committee, Jews and Irish!"

Miss Hargrave, a member of the Committee, said: "I am neither of Jewish nor of Irish ancestry, I am a DAR. Am I an American?"

"No!" answered Mrs. Wood. "When you live among the Jews and Irish, you become like them. You come to Texas and we'll make an American out of you. It'll take time, but we'll do it. Yessir!"

The school psychiatrist stated that Mrs. Wood was suffering

from a paranoid condition, manifested in her excessive feeling of superiority, bitterness, and resentment. Her license was cancelled.

Three months after her dismissal from the school system, Mrs. Wood stalked past the Superintendent's secretary and plumped a bundle on his desk. "Count them!" she said, opening the parcel, "Forty-six thousand dollars. That's what I earned on the stock market. Was I a God-damned jackass to teach school! That's a damn sight more money than you ever earned, or your God-damned Superintendent of Schools who cancelled my license! Your lousy school system stinks! Why, no self-respecting American could ever teach in your Jew-Nigger schools! A bunch of Nigger lovers, that's what you are! You come down to Texas and you'll learn to be an American."

The Superintendent left Mrs. Wood with her $46,000, still fulminating about Niggers and Jews, and how they make Americans in Texas.

The story of Emily Benton is illuminating, in that it follows a frequent pattern. For one or more of many reasons, a certain childishness appears in the teacher's behavior. This is followed by a weakening, then a breakdown, of class control. The bewildered and harassed teacher, finding the usual disciplinary methods of no avail, resorts to corporal punishment. Accused of striking her pupils, she denies this. The new need of self-defense, against such charges, leads her to externalize the blame: the children are wretches; they are plotting against her; then the teachers; then the principal. Transfer such a teacher, and the persecution moves in her mind to the new surroundings, while perhaps in retrospect—beyond the foreground of her present troubles—the old school becomes a paradise. Finally, the outraged sense of unjust and undeserved persecution erupts in a scene of violence. Of such a regression toward paranoia, Emily Benton's story is a "classical" instance.

Miss Emily Benton, at 46, had 23 years of Satisfactory teaching in an eastern town. Yet one supervisor described her in these words: "She has never grown up. She talks like a child and acts like a child; it is hard to make her stop talking. And her statements lack coherence. Here is a sample of her conversation: 'Last summer I went to Maine, because my sister has a cottage there. It was built for her by a neighbor whose daughter died of TB. You would never think one got TB up there. I used to see her when I went up there. She was studying to be a teacher. You don't have to take an examination to get a license in Maine. I studied very hard to get a license. I coached with Mr. Dane. He was very good. He died. I once saw his wife. She went to Europe. I think her daughter is a teacher.' Miss Benton is so absorbed in her own flurry of words that she doesn't listen to what anyone else is saying."

Miss Benton came to official attention through a fracas in a public bus on the way to school one morning. She turned to two fellow teachers, Mrs. Johnson and Miss Becker, who were conversing. She exclaimed to Mrs. Johnson, "Nice company you're keeping, talking to a rat like that!" Then, with clenched fist, she struck Mrs. Johnson on the face and throat. Mrs. Johnson's husband threatened to have Miss Benton arrested for felonious assault if the principal did not take action.

The principal's report to the Board was voluminous. Among the matters now unfolded, it declared:

"1. Miss Benton has frequently been charged with corporal punishment, by pupils and angry parents. She denies all these charges, at most explaining that a push has been deliberately misinterpreted as a blow. She claims that she is loved by the children and that other teachers are jealous.

"2. For years teachers have complained that Miss Benton has shouted at them and written them abusive notes. She signs most but not all of these notes; the anonymous ones are positively vile,

and she doesn't even take the trouble to disguise her handwriting. I have warned the teachers not to talk with Miss Benton."

The principal submitted some of the signed notes. They were long, rambling, abusive accusations that the teacher addressed had borne slanderous tales about Miss Benton to colleagues and friends: "I know the whole crowd of you are having a good time . . . but at least I have the satisfaction that I have never carried stories to damage another person's life. You've been a part of it and if there is justice you'll get it yet, even if you feel in your glory now . . . I'm waiting to bring out a few things too that may be a revelation to school authorities and help get a cleanup . . . My conclusion from your actions: you're unhappily married—come out in the open—don't go poking your face behind closed doors."

To the psychiatrist, Miss Benton explained that she had not fought with Mrs. Johnson, but had pushed her in retaliation for a push from her the day before. "Every incident," the psychiatrist observed, "is logically explained, but there are *too many* incidents. She attaches all the blame onto the shoulders of others; she herself is pure as driven snow." He concluded, nonetheless: "From my interviews with Miss Benton, it is impossible to establish the presence of any psychosis, or even any serious emotional disturbance that would make it inadvisable for this teacher to continue with her work. I suggest that she be transferred to another school and that there her conduct be carefully observed."

In the new school, according to its principal one of "genuinely warm, pleasant human relations," Miss Benton interpreted the frequent classroom observations as persecution, and spoke of her happiness at the school from which she had been forced out. The "persecution" was manifested among the pupils too, for within a month of her transfer a group of them went to the office complaining of favoritism, unfairness, and corporal punishment. The principal, to make the charges concrete, selected James Diller,

who said the teacher had slapped him. Miss Benton denied it. The others in the office weren't sure; James asserted they were afraid to speak out. "With Miss Benton's consent," the principal continued, "I went to her class and found over a dozen eyewitnesses willing to make signed statements (which are now filed in my office) that they saw Miss Benton strike James." Miss Benton more excitedly repeated her protests that she was being persecuted, that teachers were carrying tales about her, that she was being hounded by supervisors and that pupils were trying to upset her. "I am forced to the conclusion," said the psychiatrist after another examination, "that Miss Benton is suffering from a paranoid reaction. She is not in a proper mental condition to continue teaching."

Miss Emily Benton was retired.

Miss Benton's brother called upon the Superintendent. "I knew it would end this way!" he said. "Frankly, I'm surprised that she lasted this long. She was always peculiar, never quite got along even with the family. She didn't talk to me for years, and even to this day I don't know why. About 30 years ago she had what the doctors called a 'nervous breakdown.' She then accused our mother of poisoning her. Since then, she's never been the happy person she was before. She had tantrums, fought with everybody. God knows how she ever got through training school! She's always had fights with neighbors, other teachers, pupils . . . Before Father died, he said to me, 'Look after your sister; don't ever put her in an institution. That would break your mother's heart. Mother knows she has a cross to bear, and she bears it as best she can.' I came to you to find out what my sister will receive when she's retired, and to seek your advice."

There are no examinations, anywhere in the country, to keep such an ill woman from becoming a teacher. The Superintendent thought, grimly, of all the children Miss Benton had mistaught during her 23 years of "Satisfactory" teaching. He advised her

brother to see that Miss Benton was given psychiatric care. Her brother agreed, saying: "I have never been afraid of any kind of illness, except my sister's kind."

Suspicion, and the desire to strike out at one's imagined enemies, may be kept "within bounds"—that is, free from official cognizance or action—for years. But during these years, in many ways the teacher's fear strikes out at her confused and bewildered, or irritated and resentful pupils. Sometimes it strikes with physical blows, but unseen blows may leave a deeper hurt.

8

Delusions and Hallucinations

Suspicion, even when it grows to a continuing sense of persecution, may be deemed a borderline manifestation. It certainly may be a symptom of deep-seated disorder, and never should be shrugged aside and ignored. The next step, however, clearly carries the individual over the brink. If the "persecution" takes definite patterns in the mind, entering the range of delusions and hallucinations, if the teacher begins to have visions or hear warning sounds, immediate action is necessary.

So far as the teacher herself is concerned, if her illness has advanced this far, treatment is urgent. Statistics indicate that, with the best methods, there is over 80% likelihood of recovery if schizophrenia is promptly treated. If there is long delay, there is less than 50% chance, the likelihood of recovery decreasing with the duration of the disease before treatment starts.

Unfortunately, as was observed earlier, it is frequently hard to recognize the onset, and often comfortable to ignore the incipient stages, of the illness. Perhaps that is why more than a quarter of all the beds in the nation's hospitals are occupied by schizophrenics. And of all fields of work, as has been noted, the highest percentage of the mentally ill is found among teachers. Many of the afflicted teachers become prey to long-time delusions or hallucinations.

Simplest of the distortions of reality are ideas of reference, for example, when a person erroneously believes people are talking about her. Illusions are more specific misinterpretations of reality,

usually of objects; one sees a black spot on a well and believes that bats are flying out. As Shakespeare observed: "How easy is a bush supposed a bear!" A delusion is a false certainty, a conviction that something is so, that is not. An hallucination is the perception of non-existent objects, the actual sensation without the external stimulation of the sense involved. Thus one may hear voices where there is no human sound, smell gas when the air is clear, feel stings when nothing prickly is at hand, see persons who are imaginary or faraway or dead, sense heat on touching a cool object, taste flavors that are not in the food. The odd taste is an hallucination; thereupon to know "They are trying to poison me" is a delusion.

Both delusions and hallucinations may be built into continuing and related patterns, producing a systematized order of behavior in the aberrant person. The presence of either delusions or hallucinations is a sign that the teacher should be considered for immediate psychiatric care.

So far as the children are concerned, such an ill teacher must of course be at once removed from the classroom. But how soon this "at once" materializes depends upon the discovery of the teacher's affliction.

Too often a mentally disturbed condition smolders under the surface, like a fire in a mine, for an unknown but dangerous stretch of time before it comes to notice. It is sobering to contemplate what influence such a teacher is having on her classes.

Clifford Peck, at 45, had taught high-school history in Connecticut for 22 Satisfactory years. Children and supervisors alike seemed to enjoy his work. He was well liked, and was apparently a good influence. He might still be teaching, except that one day he went to the office and pleaded for the principal to save him.

"Maybe I am going crazy!" he declared. "But I can't stand it any longer. People stare at me in the street, and smile, and talk about me. Just yesterday a colored man smiled; then he turned to some other people and they began to talk about me."

The principal tried to reassure Mr. Peck, telling him he was probably just imagining these things. The next day Mr. Peck asked if the principal had any news. "About what?" "You know. Well-dressed people, on the street, at the movies, they all stare at me. At first I thought it was a gag, but it goes on all the time."

Mr. Peck rambled through many details of supposed staring, and asked whether the assistant superintendent knew anything about it. (The superintendent ran a summer camp at which Mr. Peck had worked one season.) Again the principal tried to reassure Mr. Peck. During the next week, however, the principal felt a lessening of Mr. Peck's control of his classes. Students from his room were repeatedly found about the building without passes. "Even cursory visits to his classroom revealed a listlessness and a discursiveness not consonant with learning." Mr. Peck was manifestly overconcerned with the staring public.

After a consultation between principal and superintendent, Mr. Peck was asked to report for a psychiatric examination. To the psychiatrist, he elaborated his story: "Since a year ago last summer, people have been spitting on the street as they pass me by. I go to the movies, I go to a restaurant; they spit. I haven't the slightest idea what it's all about. I have just a guess. I had trouble with the Teachers Union. I refused to join. I think they are annoying me." Mr. Peck went into considerable detail about the annoyances inflicted upon him by other teachers, apparently prodded by the Union. The psychiatrist diagnosed: Paranoid condition, acute.

Before the Retirement Committee, Mr. Peck's story widened, though still he blamed the Union for his ills. He had been divorced 3 years before; now he explained: "The Union told my wife I was no good—chasing women all the time. They even told her I was feeling up the big Negro girls in my class. She believed them, and she left me.

"I knew the Teachers Union was behind all this, so I left the city last summer and took a job in a factory in Massachusetts.

The workers there are strong men who work hard, eat hard, and love hard. Pretty soon they began to stare at me, and follow me around. They would say: 'Hey, Clif, with a body like yours, and those muscles, you ought to go out with the girls . . . What are you saving it for? You in training to be a judge? . . . Pinkass Fannie wants to play with you behind the machines.' So I knew the Union was following me and it was useless to try to run away. So I came back to school in September."

Thus, without any history of classroom failure, without even any prior suspicion of anything wrong, Clifford Peck talked himself into retirement. Such a story calls for pondering. How many teachers, more discreet or more secretive, are harboring delusions that distort their view while they are still guiding our children?

In many cases, delusions first manifest themselves in more or less isolated remarks that seem eccentric rather than alarming. There may even be an odd charm in the unexpected phrases. The hearers smile, but a new color has been brought into their lives. They talk to one another of the goings on of Miss Blanksome; they talk to her to see whether they can "get a rise out of her" and have further occasion for gossip. It is sometimes many months, perhaps years, before they become appallingly aware that the new color they have been amused at is the color of decay.

Miss June Dodd, aged 59, was a Satisfactory teacher in Michigan for 38 years. She had a bouquet waiting for the new principal, Miss Herndon; when thanked, she said: "They were grown in the garden of our Heavenly Father especially for you." Four years elapsed before that principal asked that Miss Dodd be examined.

Miss Herndon's report then included these observations:

"1. Miss Dodd drinks large quantities of ginger ale. There are usually two large bottles of it under her desk.

"2. Miss Dodd requested that she be assigned to yard duty every day. She says the other teachers cannot handle the discipline.

"3. She reports 100% attendance when children in her class are absent. Her attendance records have been incorrect for at least two years.

"4. She resents me and says I do not understand her. She stops teaching when I go into her room, because I will not understand.

"5. She gives the children a great deal of meaningless busy work, such as: (*a*) writing the numbers from 1 to 100 over and over; (*b*) copying paragraphs from books; and (*c*) writing, ten times each, spelling words they have already learned.

"6. She is losing her hair rapidly."

Miss Dodd told the psychiatrist that she did not drink the ginger ale during class hours; it was her lunch. Every day, all she had for lunch was ginger ale. As a consequence, she said, her hair was coming in again. "Ginger ale is the best remedy for falling hair." She could not imagine why Miss Herndon did not like her. "I never had a U rating. I don't know what will happen to me now."

Diagnosis: A paranoid condition complicated by arterial hypertension, disabling and progressive.

Miss Dodd told the Retirement Committee: "I think God wants me to retire. The other day I clearly heard Him say: 'Retire; that's the only way you'll ever get rid of Miss Herndon.' I obey God, especially when He takes the trouble to talk to me. I don't want to teach any more; not for anything in this world. God is my salvation; I don't want to lose my soul."

While a sense of persecution is usually tied to persons associated with the school, delusions and hallucinations are likely to spring from fears or deficiencies deeper in the afflicted teacher. They may develop out of incidents in her life that have no relation to her school work. When they grow into credence, however, they occupy an increasing proportion of the victim's mental life; they fill her thoughts when she should be attending to the children and the things the children should learn; they incapacitate her

as a teacher. Often these delusions are not discussed with others; a breakdown in discipline demands supervisory attention, and then the deeper causes are revealed.

Miss Ellen Bradford, aged 55, for 14 years was a Satisfactory Pennsylvania teacher of children of retarded mental development. This may explain the principal's delay in requesting that the teacher herself be given a mental examination. He filed his request in December, but his specifications began September 20, with indications of earlier failing: "Whenever I visit Miss Bradford's room, she seems to be utterly oblivious of all the unusual occurrences taking place before her very eyes." The list of these "unusual occurrences" takes 12 typewritten pages; the following are but a few:

"*October 13.* I found the teacher finally concerned. She was trying to separate two boys engaged in a fist fight; the rest of the class was shouting and running around the room. The floor was covered with miscellaneous articles, including parts of the printing set. Some of the girls were fooling around with the boys. Some of the children were standing on the tables.

"*October 18.* I found the teacher in the hall, engaged in a scuffle with a boy and his mother. It seems the boy had run out of Miss Bradford's class and gone home for his mother. In my office the boy stated: 'This morning I said it was cold. Miss Bradford took hold of my sweater and tore it. The other day she said I stole some money from her, but another boy had it in his shoes.'

"The mother stated: 'I want my boy's class changed because I've had too much trouble with this teacher. She came to my home to tell me my boy is a bad boy and a thief. She was just pulling me by the arm as if I was the boy. She is a crazy teacher.'

"An examination of the boy's record shows that he had an A record in conduct for six terms. Hence, it would seem that the general situation in Miss Bradford's classroom is responsible for the change.

"November 18. The school's house telephone kept ringing. Investigation showed it was being rung by a line of children, each waiting for a turn, in Miss Bradford's room, with the teacher standing obliviously by.

"November 23. Statement of Carmen Hernan: 'When I came into Miss Bradford's room, Horace began to bother me, then three of us began to make noise. We yelled. Then the teacher got a stick and went after us. Then Henry Dee got up, and we ran outside. I wouldn't let him come with me into the bathroom.'

"Statement of Henry Dee: 'When I came to Miss Bradford's room, I started making noise. Horace started saying bad words. Then Carmen and I ran out of the room. When I got back, I took a green pepper from a girl's pocketbook, and I threw it at the teacher.' "

The psychiatrist reported that Miss Bradford "is in a highly nervous state and is convinced that she is full of cancer germs. She took care of her sister, who died of cancer, and she says she has the disease 'all over.' When I told her cancer is not a germ disease, she laughed and said: 'I've seen the germs with my own eyes; they look just like tiny mosquitoes, but they don't buzz or sting.' *Diagnosis:* Severe neurosis (hypochondriasis), with no insight into her condition."

Miss Ellen Bradford was retired.

Sometimes the delusions are so overpowering that, as noted, the teacher reports them to a supervisor, requesting his help in ridding her of the inimical forces. Miss Sarah Scheffel, aged 55, had been transferred, 10 and again 8 years ago, each time after an Unsatisfactory rating. Her teaching for the past 8 years was Satisfactory; she was in charge of a class of second-year girls in Delaware.

Her principal requested in April that she be called for a mental examination, but it was the previous December that Miss Scheffel

had first telephoned the principal's home to ask whether she had been reported to the School Board. She was sure her neighbors had reported her, because of her protests at their behavior. At first she told the principal that it was white slavery and detectives were investigating. A day or two later, in his office, she changed her story: the people upstairs were making hydrogen bombs, and were recording everything she said.

The next day, Miss Scheffel sent for the principal to come to her classroom. She told him the radar machine was on, and they were listening to everything. She pointed to a child and said: "He says he hears something, too." She ordered the children to repeat "Come here! Come here!" The classroom was very warm; all the shades were drawn.

A few days later, Miss Scheffel told the principal she had heard voices in her apartment, sometimes ridiculing, sometimes threatening her. At times they were of an insulting and sexual nature.

At the psychiatrist's, Miss Scheffel at once exclaimed: "While I was waiting outside you were testing me. The voices in your waiting-room kept saying: 'Miss Scheffel is a teacher, a teacher, a pretty teacher.' They said it in rhythm, like a song." She said she realized now that the voices were on recorders, just as her own words were picked up by radar. "She stated that she first heard these voices 3 years ago. However, it is quite apparent from her general emotional poverty, poor judgment, and complete lack of insight that these symptoms have been present for a much longer time."

Miss Scheffel could not do such a simple arithmetic problem as: *If 2 pencils cost 8 cents, how much would 10 cost?* She said that George Washington died about 50 years ago.

Diagnosis: Schizophrenia, paranoid type. Miss Sarah Scheffel was retired. If she herself had not invited the principal to her classroom, to join the children listening to the radar, her classes might still be straining to hear the voices the teacher was drawing

out of thin air. One of the children, you notice, said he heard something, too.

Mental illness is a matter which everyone feels ready to discuss, but which few persons other than psychiatrists will recognize officially. A Superintendent who does not renew a teacher's contract at the end of her first year is hardly likely to set down, as his reason, that the teacher is "queer," or "mentally unbalanced," or indeed to allude in any way to such a cause for dropping her from his faculty. Miss Alice Gilson had, in fact, in her wide-ranging career, accumulated some letters of praise for her classroom work, with no reference to her personality complications. Alice Gilson was a kindergarten teacher, aged 44.

Miss Gilson's record showed many brief spells as a teacher of kindergarten children: Texas, 2 years; New Jersey, 2 years; Connecticut, 1 year; New York, 2 years; Ohio, two cities, 1 year each; New Jersey, another year; Long Island, one city 1 year, one 6 months; Texas again, 6 months.

She had managed to hold her latest post for 4 years. Then she telephoned a parent, Mrs. Robinson, whose son Michael had said he felt—it sounded like—"greenblue contempt" for his teacher; evidently the boy "was being imposed upon and exploited by a group of perverts" and Mr. Robinson should get in touch with the FBI to track them down. Instead, Mr. Robinson got in touch with the principal.

Miss Gilson then told the principal that for 4 years she had been hearing noises in her classroom. Also, the perverts, acting with a sinister machine she believed was of the nature of radar, were radiating impulses to her that stung like "lice biting."

When the Superintendent asked for an explanation, Miss Gilson submitted 27 pages of explanatory protest, from which I quote:

"There are forces at work and I want you to help me solve my

problem. The FBI can do it and save every American citizen. They can hire scientists who will find out how the stimuli are sent into my body, my legs, my thighs, and places where a lady shouldn't be touched—pornographic stimuli. Help get me experts in radar electronics and video. Who gives them the authority to experiment on my body? I want them also to look into the olfactory stimuli. I think all the evacuated waste materials including nasal secretions and secretions from the eyes have been included. It's all pornographic and not in good taste nor ethical and not associated with civilized man. The Constitution will have to be amended . . . Since early summer 4 years ago, some kind of walkie-talkie process has been continually attached to my brain waves 24 hours per day, awake or sleeping . . . My brain waves or person were evidently drafted for experimentation strictly without my knowledge or consent. I immediately began playing games with this omnipresent scientific attachment, to determine in what degree I could 'beat' the recording system through deliberate use of the mental censor. The trick was, I discovered, to apply a brake to inner speech processes. This frustrated the recording process. Also I immediately turned on inner speech into the unseen radio-electronic-radar apparatus, and said: 'This invention could be used to insure peace to all the world.' This I addressed to the President of the United States, hoping that this reaction of mine would be noted and recorded. Instead, there issued from the apparatus a pornographic gibberish with which I totally disclaim connection . . . Other forms of experimentation have been tried on me with this invention, strictly over my rigorous veto, strictly in violation of habeas corpus, and imposed from without with a virulent tyranny and czaristic ruthlessness that would read like a pornographic treatise out of the annals of a corrupt and contemptible pseudo-science . . . The first attack of the 'biting impulse,' stimulated through these electronic devices, occurred on Longview Lane, when I was walking near my residence . . . Meantime I miss my adorable children at

Higley School. It is my intention that, in spite of invasion of the premises, they shall be educated in the ways of free speech and democracy on their level of maturity and development."

Miss Gilson also kept a minute-by-minute diary of the action of the "radar impulse" upon her. Part of one evening's record reads:

"At approximately 10:26: Faint stimulus upon lower back of neck, unwarranted interference with subject's writing, mayhap not pornographic.

"At approximately 10:38: Faint stinging stimulus under left thigh, to 'rear' and around 'front.'

"At approximately 10:39: Stinging stimulus lower abdomen toward pelvic region—vagina. Across my buttocks, across my back, and to my vagina; the doctor said it was the vulva. I spent a night of terrific emotions. Pornography is repulsive to me; it is an unpleasant sex suggestion and insinuation. It is up to the detectives to find out where these voices come from, in regard to the experimentation with the kinaesthetic process."

In the subsequent investigation, it was discovered that Miss Gilson had formerly been under mental treatment, by a privately engaged psychiatrist, for a period of over 5 years, during which time she was on active service as a kindergarten teacher in six different cities.

Many of the delusions we have observed are associated with electronics; terms such as "video," "radar," "radiation" are frequently misapplied by the mentally ill. This is not surprising, when one reflects that most delusions have always been linked with a form of control from outside. The witch and the maniac were both thought to be possessed by spirits. This notion is preserved in the language, in such expressions as "Whatever possessed you to do that?" Contrasted with this, of course, is self-possession.

This external domination need no longer be thought of as an

actual "possession" of the body, for the idea of remote control has seeped through to the uneducated mind. Certainly, however little understood, remote control is in the working vocabulary of the youth in our schools and, as a fact of some sort, is within range of the most unscientific teacher. Every town with a television store has had a window exhibit, so arranged that persons outside, by the push of a button, can change the program on the television set inside the store; and millions have operated, or hope to command, the same push-button "remote control" from the depths of their couches or beds. Thus, when illness afflicts the brain today and delusions of outside control and the imposition of an external will are accepted as fact, they come naturally to roost upon the fact of radar.

The story of Miss Mabel Wicks, aged 57, with 35 years of Satisfactory service in Wisconsin, differs from other episodes of hallucination in the degree to which she brought the children of her class into line with her false reality.

Miss Wicks failed to heed several requests to report for medical examination. Finally the psychiatrist saw her at her home, "clad in a housedress, hair untidy; and her kitchen, which I surveyed, was topsy-turvy." He reported that she had long been suffering from "schizophrenia, paranoid type, severe." Her false fancies, indeed, had been building up since World War II. She had come to believe that her assistant principal and her principal were keeping tabs on her because of her German background. "They are both spies for Churchill and the FBI," she told the Retirement Committee. "They electrified my bed and sent me messages over the radio. I am not one to be fooled. I wrote to the President of the United States to stop this, but he didn't even answer my letter, and I voted for him . . . They even listen in on my telephone. And I don't write letters any more; they are opened by Churchill's spies. I told my children about this and they felt very sorry. They all wrote letters to Churchill and to the FBI,

telling them to stop persecuting me. Some of the parents who are in the plot objected to the letters . . ."

Miss Mabel Wicks was retired. But ponder the state of the children as they waited for Churchill's reply.

Such hallucinations, confided to children, or coming to them confusedly through a teacher's acts and deviant words, shake the solid bases of reality upon which the children are trying to build their lives and open before them, especially to the more susceptible, vistas of strange gulfs of not wholly understood temptation and abysms of nightmare terror.

9

Delusions of Grandeur

THE DELUSIONS thus far discussed are the result of unresolved conflicts. When the battle has been more nearly lost, the mentally ill person may seek shelter in comforting retreat. A different sort of delusion then makes its appearance, often accompanied by euphoria, a false sense of radiant well-being. What the wish-fulfillment reverie or dream is to the more normal, the delusion of grandeur is to the more seriously afflicted. The disappointments of life, the average or inferior level of one's personality or accomplishments, are glossed over with a substitute glory that has become reality. One teacher of rather puny stature used to hold up his arm and exclaim: "Look at that muscle! When I walk down the street everyone admires my physique. 'What a man!' they say; 'What a man!' " A school principal whose grandfathers were both petty merchants, at faculty meetings often referred to her grandfather "who was an Admiral in the Navy." One teacher, on being requested to report to the doctor, declared: "I represent the War Department. When I tell my friends in Washington that I've been called for a psychiatric examination, they'll get into action—but quick!" A teacher, born and brought up and teaching in a city in Illinois, charged with using indecent language in the classroom, retorted: "I am a Texan. In Texas, men talk like men."

With less loss of connection with their surroundings, but touched with euphoria, they make such remarks as "I can teach anyone any language." "You won't find another teacher like me

anywhere." "If they had sense enough to listen to me, I'd revitalize the whole educational system!"

Whether it be a glory of the past, a present pride, or a boast of the future, the exaltation and its supposed source are wholly without ground in the real world of the afflicted teacher.

One man, still teaching in a southern high school, for years has walked in the school corridors, uttering praise of himself in the third person, in a tiny high-pitched voice as though attempting ventriloquism. If a teacher is near, the whisper may call: "Don't you wish you could handle a class like Dr. Whitsun?" or "You may be a young loafer, but Dr. Whitsun will outlive you all!" If children are nearby, the thin piping may say: "Don't you wish you were in Dr. Whitsun's class?" "Dr. Whitsun could make something of you, in one term." This idiosyncrasy is widely known, but there have been no more disturbing manifestations, no one has ever suggested a mental examination, and at the time of this writing the teacher is still "making something" of the city's children.

In the stories that follow, there was more manifest cause for drastic action.

Rose Reinhardt, a 55-year-old teacher of the eighth year in a Maryland elementary school, had 35 years of Satisfactory service. A medical examination for her was requested by the principal, who had been in the school for 2 years. Miss Reinhardt, on meeting the doctor, at once said: "I am the only one in the school with an M.A. degree; the others are all jealous of me, especially the principal, who comes from a trade school. I am bright, and I have to teach the dull. I have always been rated the best teacher in the school."

Teachers, of course, are not "rated" in order of excellence.

The principal's request that Miss Reinhardt be examined stated, in part: "She is a conscientious teacher and makes an effort to achieve success. She seems to be struggling, however, under a severe emotional strain, which is no doubt aggravated by the

constant scenes of struggle and of defiance by the children. When the problem first came to my attention, on my appointment here 2 years ago, I found that she was relying upon the assistant-to-principal, giving him full responsibility for discipline in her classes. He had to take them over as often as ten times a day, to restore order. She also sent large numbers of children out of the room; they were placed in other classes, sometimes for as long as a week. Discussing this situation with Miss Reinhardt, I found her convinced that her work was perfectly satisfactory and that turning over her disciplinary problems to the assistant constituted 'co-operation.'

"The fact that, under the departmental system, Miss Reinhardt meets many classes is having a very serious effect on the morale of the seventh and eighth years. I have had many complaints from parents, who state that the children are learning nothing, that they are forming bad habits and in some cases carrying into their homes habits of rudeness and lawlessness acquired in the classroom . . . Certainly the best interests of the school, the children, and the parents would be served by her retirement."

As he was newly assigned, and she was a teacher with 33 years of Satisfactory service, the principal "from a trade school" had with perhaps proper caution waited 2 years before asking that Miss Reinhardt be examined. But why had the previous principal taken no such step?

Miss Reinhardt continued to talk to the doctor of her achievements: "This is a sad world; there is a great deal of wisdom in kindness. I have always been kind. I have always been a great teacher. I tell my children: 'I will help you to be good citizens. I have made doctors, lawyers, all men prominent in the community. I will help you too.' "

The doctor reported: "Because of her inability to function adequately in the classroom, Miss Reinhardt has built up a defense mechanism, delusional in nature, which is acceptable to her but

at variance with the everyday demands of her teaching duties. *Diagnosis:* Paranoid condition, with transformation of personality and emotional instability; permanent and progressive."

Shortly after her retirement, Miss Reinhardt wrote a letter to the Mayor, which was referred to the Superintendent of Schools. It was not so long as many such, being but 12 pages. It ended with a poem of the American colonial patriot, John Dickinson, "A Song of American Freedom," and shorter verses of her own composition, dedicated to "the greatest Mayor our fair city ever had." Among the statements in the letter are these:

"All my ratings have been Satisfactory. No one ever doubted I was the best teacher in the school. However, just before the end of the term I was assaulted by a boy named James Brewer who had failed all term long and expected to pass by brute force. And my final examinations were stolen by a paroled thief named Elmer Thong, who had looted the neighborhood of many thousands of dollars by forming a teenage gang. When I reported these things to the principal, she blithely stated that teachers must be ready to take a beating in the line of duty.

"I am not a Communist, because my father is a retired manufacturer and property owner, in the best section of the town. Moreover, my grandfather was President of the Syracuse Synagogue for 10 years, which practically makes me a Daughter of the American Revolution.

"I also want you to know, Mr. Mayor, that I was told by the assistant principal to teach grammar tangentially. As an unmarried virgin (and proud of it too!) teacher, I am enraged at this bit of obscenity, from an evidently lewd, lascivious, and libidinous man. Specifically, tangentially means 'touching, meeting a curve or surface at only one point, and not cutting it if produced—said of straight line, curve, or surface.' (*Webster's Secondary School Dictionary.*) May I suggest a vigorous crackdown on such obscene personalities. I do not want to teach again in the school system,

if I am compelled to relinquish my roles of Woodrow Wilson, John Adams, Andrew Jackson, Benjamin Franklin, etc. But I want the facts in this case brought to light."

In some cases, as in Miss Reinhardt's, the delusions of grandeur are paralleled by a deteriorated performance that demands attention. The complete assurance of the teacher is counterbalanced by a complete collapse of her discipline. Even in such a case, it took 2 years for the principal to cry out for remedy. During this time, the prognosis for the teacher became far less favorable, while the unfortunate influence upon the children (which the principal's comments pointed out) was permitted to continue.

In other cases, despite weakened control over the class and numerous complaints of children and parents, the teacher is coddled or endured until her deluded sense of importance leads her to acts outside the classroom, by which she thrusts herself upon public notice and thus draws the attention of the school officials.

George Strang, in this fashion, taught for 10 years after he began his extracurricular career as a self-constituted genius.

George Strang, a breezy, garrulous man of 38, arrived at a dinner in honor of an educator, announcing that he was the representative of the State Department. Told by the Reception Committee that there must be some mistake, he retorted: "I am sure you would not care to offend the Government." After quick deliberation, the Committee made place for him on the dais. When someone identified Strang as a classroom teacher, the Committee reported the incident to the Superintendent, who sent for Strang.

The Superintendent reports the meeting: "He appeared at my office with a young, blond 'secretary' who helped him carry some huge scrapbooks. When I questioned him about the dinner he showed me a badge, then ordered the girl to take down every word I uttered. Thereupon I directed her to leave my office; as

she did so, Strang said: 'Make note of the fact that he put you out.' "

Investigation of Strang's career revealed that he had become a teacher as a last resort. He had tried work as a salesman, a promoter, an insurance counselor, a financial consultant; he had been employed in a bank and with a public relations firm. Then he began to teach. But at the same time—10 years before this inquiry—he rented desk space in a midtown office. From an imposing address, on various letterheads, he became President of the Society for World Harmony, of the Association for Civic Improvement, and of some six other imaginary organizations. He wrote to the heads of the State and the Federal Governments, and to prominent persons whose names appeared in the press. The letters were innocent enough: congratulations to those honored or promoted and advice to members of the cabinet or other officials. Their acknowledgments filled his large scrapbooks. To his school colleagues he would sometimes confide that his advice had been sought by Eisenhower; that he had dined with and given counsel to the Secretary of War; that he had been engaged to draw up new codes for the Secret Service. "Keep this to yourself!" he would admonish them.

The principal's report made the Superintendent wonder at the mistaken tolerance of supervisors. It said, in part: "Mr. Strang has taught in this school for 10 years and since his first day here has been an exhibitionist, regarded as 'a queer one' by everybody including parents . . . During Fire Drill he dons a white coat, carries a small valise marked First Aid, and puts on airs of great importance . . . He has tried to conduct girls' beauty contests among the school children. He exercises a malevolent influence on the children. After spending some time under his tutelage they become as boisterous, as loud-mouthed and as aggressive as their teacher. One can always recognize a child who has been exposed to Mr. Strang for any length of time . . . Mr. Strang savagely

resents even the mildest criticism, yet is himself highly critical of his colleagues and merciless in his criticism of his superiors. He is universally disliked . . . I had to order him several times to remove a gun which he kept in his closet 'in case' . . . He is always in a high state of excitement, is usually fighting somebody or something. Wherever he is, there is no peace. He thinks he is a genius, and he is—at creating trouble. Mr. Strang and trouble go together like ham and eggs. No one can reason with him because he knows he is always right. I am glad that Mr. Strang's strange conduct has come to the attention of the authorities."

The authorities might have thought it strange that in 10 years Mr. Strang's strange conduct had not been brought to their attention. In activities among adults, eccentricity may in some measure be shrugged away; where children are subjected to such influence, there should be greater watchfulness and prompter guard.

George Strang's manner was likely to impress a stranger favorably. The psychiatrist stated: "He enjoys the disturbance and the attention it brings him. He covets the responsibility of being the leader. His reasoning is frequently defective but keen, plausible, and easily imposed upon susceptible persons" [such as children]. "I would not care to diagnose this man as psychotic but do feel from this examination and the information in the folder that a diagnosis of a paranoid personality is warranted."

After Mr. Strang was retired, he came for days to the Superintendent's office and sat for hours. When asked to leave he would say: "I am a citizen and this is a public office; I have a perfect right to sit here." He annoyed the clerks with constant remarks, such as: "Hey Sourpuss; no wonder you have a puss like that, working in this office!" "Hi, Miss Busby; you're not a bad-looking girl. How about joining me? I can get you twice what you're earning here." "Hey Toots, do you want a tootsie roll?"

Mr. Strang refused to leave the office until police were called

and charges preferred against him. Before the judge, he insisted on acting as his own attorney. At the close of the trial, the minutes of which fill 87 pages, the judge found George Strang guilty of disorderly conduct. For a decade, his obstreperous and superior attitude had been warping the children: "One can always recognize a child who has been exposed to Mr. Strang . . ." Every troubled teacher leaves stigmata on the children.

Some schools of thought state that there is a sexual deficiency or aberration behind all such mental difficulties. If so, in many cases it lies beneath the manifest activities. In George Strang's case, for example, the only known actions that might lead to such an interpretation are his remarks to the clerks in the Superintendent's office. These, however, seem to go little beyond the banter or the sarcastic jibes such a situation might call forth in persons considered normal.

What might happen in the classroom and what goes unreported because of the child's apprehension or the parent's fear of publicity, can for the most part only be surmised. It was the charge of sexual advances that brought to light the story of Theodore Benson.

Theodore Benson, aged 43, had taught in Illinois for 17 Satisfactory years. Then Barbara Hatch's parents came to school, and Barbara repeated to the principal the story she had told them. Mr. Benson, she said, had put his hand on her leg, then moved it up under her skirts and touched her private parts. She was standing in the clothes closet, after school. She was so shocked that she stood almost paralyzed, unable to protest, while he fondled her.

Mr. Benson vehemently denied the charge. He said he had been trying to help Barbara get out quickly, because he had important things to do, and she must have misunderstood. Barbara's parents, to avoid publicity for the girl, dropped the charges. The principal, however, felt that other children had heard of the incident and

that it would be better for all concerned if Mr. Benson were to be transferred to another school. When Mr. Benson fought the transfer, other things came out.

Among the principal's statements were these:

"1. For the past 3 years, it has been Mr. Benson's custom before the Commencement Exercises, to station himself outside the principal's office—though not assigned near there—and to smile and greet parents and guests with the words: 'I am glad to see you. I am the principal.'

"2. Mr. Benson has, on occasion, burst inappropriately into song in the school corridors.

"3. Two terms ago, Mr. Benson wrote the word 'Supervision' in an unassigned period on his program, and spent the period in the office of the Science Department. So complete was his assumption of authority that several teachers in the department and the acting chairman of another department inquired when Mr. Benson had been assigned to supervision.

"4. A year ago, when several of Mr. Benson's colleagues met him in the building where an examination for chairman of department was being held, he informed them he was to be a proctor. Half an hour later, they found him beside them, taking the examination.

"5. There have been innumerable instances of Mr. Benson's failure to do work required of him, or to report to assigned duties."

The psychiatrist reported: "Mr. Benson is deeply confused and incoherent, and apparently has been in this state for a long time. He manifests aggressive tendencies and because of his long-standing illness cannot be held responsible if they take overt action. *Diagnosis:* Schizophrenia. His family should be advised to put him under psychiatric care without delay."

To the Retirement Committee Mr. Benson protested: "You are getting me all muddled. Am I a criminal? Have I committed murder? I just want to go back to school. The school should not

be without a principal for such a long time. You better send me right back."

Theodore Benson was retired. And Barbara's story makes one wonder whether other more docile or more frightened girls kept quiet under the handling of this self-constituted supervisor.

Here is a story hard to classify. One cannot be sure whether the teacher acted from a mistaken sense of humor, out of sheer impudence, or because of an inner breakdown. The only conclusion her examiners could reach was that her deviation from the norm was too great to permit her to remain in charge of children.

Nobody had complained about Mrs. Terry Conklin, aged 54. In her 31 years of Satisfactory teaching, there were no records of complaints by children or parents. She maintained good discipline, satisfied her supervisors that she taught well, and apparently exerted a steadying and sound influence upon the children. Inside Mrs. Conklin, for no one knows how many years, a fire was smoldering. When teachers were told that they might file evidence of courses taken and higher degrees earned, to gain a salary increase, that fire broke into flames.

This is the application she filed:

"I, Terry Conklin, certify that I hold the degrees of Master of Arts, Master of Science etc. granted to me on January 31 by the School of Practical Experience. No photostatic copies can be presented; the degrees were earned in the School of Hard Knocks and Practical Experience.

"I, Terry Conklin, hereby certify that I hold the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science, granted to me July 4 by the School of Matrimony.

"In addition, I have completed 30 semester hours in approved courses in the School of Matrimony, as follows: Medicine, Banking, Domestic Science, Child Care, Sewing, Carpentry, Painting, House Cleaning . . . Self-Discipline, Patience. Total 30,400 hours.

"I'll settle for $35,000."

When the Superintendent asked Mrs. Conklin why she had filed such an application, she responded: "I guess it's my Irish ancestry. I've heard of people having degrees conferred upon them without any college education. I feel that I am bright in practical matters . . . I'll even go to the Governor."

In the meantime, Mrs. Conklin had refused to submit to the chest X-ray examination teachers were required to take. She was sent to a school psychiatrist. To him she explained her refusal on the grounds that (1) she was in good health, and (2) the wording of the order in respect to clothing was in violation of constitutional rights.

As to the application for salary increase, the psychiatrist reported that Mrs. Conklin claimed "that she is the best judge of her qualifications. It was impossible to get her to understand that department rules with respect to credentials must apply to her as to all other teachers . . . Mrs. Conklin is suffering from a paranoid condition. It is quite obvious to me that she is mentally and emotionally unstable, lacks insight, and is not at present capable of efficient performance of duty."

Mrs. Conklin came to the Retirement Committee with her husband. At one point he started to answer a question, but she interposed sharply: "Keep your mouth shut, you old fool! I can take care of myself." Mrs. Terry Conklin, M.A. of the School of Hard Knocks, was retired.

It is, of course, the children that take the hard knocks.

10

Euphoria

EUPHORIA, or the false sense of well-being, of exalted and superior mental or physical state, may possess a person at length without developing delusions that shock those nearby or violently disturb the tenor of the school days. At the same time, the continuing influence of such a teacher is likely to do considerable cumulative harm. If she scorns her colleagues and considers the children trash—"What can one expect, these degenerate days!"—she may manage to maintain discipline but will develop in the children a spirit of hate and a cold lack of sympathy that may undermine their character.

This is easy to point out theoretically. The problem of the principal is harder, for he often must weigh doubly unsatisfactory conditions on the scales. If he undergoes the strain and trouble and possibly court proceedings involved in seeking relief from such a teacher, in the present continuing shortage he must wonder what kind of incompetent will be sent him in her place. This is just one, but a major, factor in producing the long tolerance of what should be intolerable conditions. Thus John Averill, at 59, was blithely carrying on his destructive career as a teacher in Maryland, when circumstances wholly outside the school brought him to the Superintendent's notice.

A young man about 19, accompanied by a neatly dressed, vivacious girl a year or two younger, asked to speak with the Superintendent. The young man said at once: "Mary here is

pregnant. I want to marry her. Her father is a school teacher and won't give his consent."

"Does he know his daughter is pregnant?"

"Yes, sir. But he won't give his consent. We're both under age and we can't get married without it."

"How does your mother feel, Mary?"

"She hopes for us to get married, but there's nothing she can do. Father is—he's a mule!"

The Superintendent explained to the couple that the matter was quite outside his jurisdiction. They pleaded with him to intervene; finally he said he would talk with the father if they would see that the mother also came. The father was John Averill.

We quote from the Superintendent's report of the interview: "John Averill's clothes were shabby; his collar and shirt were frayed and mended. His wife wore an outmoded coat and hat." Asked why he opposed the marriage, Averill replied: "She wants to marry a man far beneath her. He's a plumber. He has had no education, and has no respect for education or culture. I don't think he's a fit husband for my daughter."

"But he is the father of her child. It seems to me that you should rather do all you can to hasten the marriage. You are a teacher. The future of an unborn child is at stake."

Averill persisted: "I think that a marriage contracted under such circumstances is not a good marriage and will soon go on the rocks."

Here Mrs. Averill spoke up: "But our elder daughter was married in the same way, and that turned out happily. They have two children now; her husband earns a good living and has made Virginia a good husband. He gives her all the money she needs, which is more than I can say for my own husband."

"What do you mean?" the Superintendent asked. Mrs. Averill needed little encouragement to get it off her mind: "My husband is a real miser. He gives me $3.42 a day. I have to put down on paper every penny I spend. If I spend 3 cents over my allowance,

there are scenes. He is a tyrant, too. Dinner must be ready at 6 o'clock. That means not 1 minute sooner or later. One day somebody scratched the dining-room table. It was a slight scratch, easily mended; but he shouted at the top of his lungs, called me 'Whore of Babylon.' He has called all three of us 'Strumpets, Tramps, Infidels, Bastards, She-Devils, Ignoramuses, Cheapsters, Scum of the Earth, Witches, Bitches.' I can repeat these names by heart because I've heard them so often. He is a teacher and a minister, but words are not enough; he beats me. My arms, my chest—sometimes my eyes too—are black and blue. He does other horrible things too, that I told my doctor about. Look at me. I'm only 52, but I look 80, don't I? Can you blame my children for wanting to get away from the house? They got no love from their father, so they took their love where they could find it. I don't blame them. They hate everything their father likes."

(One wonders whether Mr. Averill's pupils hate everything their teacher likes.)

The Superintendent turned to the father, who looked at him disapprovingly, shrugged, and said: "My family exasperates me. Not one of them has any respect for books or culture. They never read. I have a fine library, the complete works of Chaucer, Spenser, Eliot, Dickens, Thackeray. They never open them. They want cheap movies, cheap magazines, trashy novels about free love, lascivious and lecherous literature. That's what they want; and to think that I brought them into the world. May God forgive me! But it's not my fault. My wife never scolded them; she never watched over them; I have been the watch-dog. They are as unlike me as summer is to winter." Tears rolled down his cheeks. Then he continued: "How can I love such children? And yet my heart is full of love; so I give my love to the children I teach, and to any flock the Lord sends me. I can show you many letters of appreciation from congregations I have served lovingly."

"Why do you beat your wife?" the Superintendent asked.

"Who loves well chastises well. I punish them when they de-

serve it. I am a good man; I have no vices whatsoever. I bought my house for my wife and children; her name is on the deed. I meant well for us all, but they did not turn out as I had hoped, and I am profoundly disappointed, profoundly disappointed. Some day I shall go back to England, where there still is culture and refinement. That is all I live for. A man must have something to cling to. I cannot cling to my family; they are lost. I can do nothing for them. As soon as I can, I want to return to England."

"Yes!" his wife broke in. "That's what he's always threatening, to go back to England, the land of culture and refinement. But what refinement does he show? He talks about morals and fine literature. One day I found a book he was reading, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He told me he was exposing it to his friends. I can tell you more, but I have too much respect to do so. He talks too much about morals. And he talks about his 'library.' His bedroom is his library. Books are piled all around the bed; he won't let me make the bed for fear of disturbing the books. The room is so filthy that I keep the door locked. Is that the way to make childen love and respect him?"

"Let's come to the point," said the Superintendent. "Mr. Averill, will you consent to your daughter's marriage?"

"Yes," Mr. Averill replied, "I consent."

Several months later, the young husband and wife came to the Superintendent's office with a picture of their son, and said they were happy and eternally grateful.

At the end of the term, the Superintendent asked for a report on Mr. Averill's teaching. Here are some items from the principal's response:

"Mr. Averill is resented by his pupils because: (*a*) he is unreasonably strict; (*b*) he punishes them frequently and excessively; (*c*) he slaps them or pinches their ears; (*d*) he lectures them constantly on their crudeness and lack of culture; and (*e*) he assigns long homework tasks as disciplinary measures. For

example: A boy who had the boldness to ask why, if he liked England so much better than the United States, he didn't go there, was required to write, 1,000 times: 'England is a land of genuine culture and true refinement.'

"His reputation as an unkind, harsh disciplinarian has been established over the years and the younger brothers and sisters of former pupils refuse to attend his classes. Mr. Averill has become a community problem."

That such a man should become "a community problem" is less his fault than his supervisors'. The principal did make one effort to ease the situation by assigning Mr. Averill to tend the library instead of to teach. In this post, he created other difficulties. "He would not permit the children to read many of the books on the library shelf because, in his opinion, these books were not 'cultural.' When I spoke to him about his censorship, he told me that his judgment was better than mine, and that he knew best what was good for children. 'After all,' I quote his exact words, 'I am in point of culture, refinement, breeding, and education, your superior, even though you are the principal.' I mentioned the grueling tests a principal must pass, but he interrupted: 'Yes! I know all about those examinations. People coach and cram a lot of encyclopedic facts and, when the test is over, as quickly forget them; they never have culture, which rises from living among cultured people with refined interests in art and literature, and curiosity for learning. It takes time, generations, for true culture. Look at your Examiners! Are they broad-minded men of culture? How do you expect them to recognize the genuine thing when they meet it? I failed the examination twice—not because of lack of culture, but because of supervisors—so-called superiors—who are jealous of my accomplishments which dwarf theirs.'"

The psychiatrist noted that John Averill had come from England at the age of 17 and worked at various mechanical jobs while studying at Normal School. During the interview, Mr. Averill

was friendly and expansive. He suggested that his principal, nearing 70, was growing erratic and senile. He seemed willing to talk on and on, but the psychiatrist concluded: "Mr. Averill is alert, coherent, relevant. He is well oriented in all spheres; his memory, retention and recall, concentration, and ability to calculate, are excellent. He is suffering from a psychoneurotic condition, hypomanic state. This is shown by his overproductiveness, mild elation, excessive self-confidence, and lack of insight. It is probable that he has always had hypomanic tendencies (excessive drive, energy, overconfidence) which now, with the advance of age, are exaggerated to illness. In this condition the lack of judgment, the headstrong unreasoning attitude, the development of feelings of scorn and hostility, interfere with the ability to function in spite of the normal intellectual activity."

Mr. Averill made a good impression on the Retirement Committee. The psychiatrist, however, warned them not to be taken in by his glibness of speech and refined manners. On the basis of the principal's and the doctor's reports, John Averill was retired.

John Averill would probably still be teaching, if his daughter had not become pregnant. On such extraneous vicissitudes does the mental health of our children hang! And no one can say how many teachers, smug in their private euphoria, are even now contributing to the heedlessness and shiftlessness and don't-give-a-damnism of the growing generation.

11

Hypochondriasis

THE QUESTION OF HYPOCHONDRIASIS, or constant imaginary ailment, is one that a layman can hardly presume to discuss, especially when medical men are ready to assure us that the mind may work upon the body, so that in some cases fear of illness may create the justification of that fear.

The question also rises, to what extent does hypochondria impair the value of an otherwise seemingly effective teacher? There is unquestionably a measure of emotional strain in constant fear, in overconcern with oneself, and a consequent likelihood of indifference to or intolerance of others. Some of the remarks teachers have made imply this exaggerated self-concern: "I'd be terribly constipated if I didn't eat wheat germs every day." "I have terrible pains all over, and they seldom give me any relief." "There is something wrong with me, but you don't want to frighten me"—to the doctor whose thorough check has just found her in excellent health. It may be that the self-centered concern behind such statements will not lower the quality of a teacher's work below acceptable standards, though the measurement of the influence of personality is beyond our present scales. We have no scientific way of telling whether, how, and how much a cranky, self-centered, hypochondriac teacher affects her pupils.

On the other hand, hypochondriasis may be a sign or a consequence of deeper and definitely dangerous disorders. The story of Erna Coven raises such questions.

Mrs. Erna Coven, a 43-year-old Satisfactory teacher of biology

in a western high school, was reported by her principal for excessive absence, extending over several years, but culminating in 16 days of absence in the 2 months prior to his report. He said that he was concerned on two scores. One was the health of the teacher, who claimed she was allergic to fumes, tobacco smoke, and dust—and there was considerable dust because the building next the school was being torn down. His other concern was for the success of her pupils, for it was difficult to secure a day-to-day substitute licensed in biology, and usually during their teacher's absence her five classes were perforce given a study period.

The physical examination of Mrs. Coven "revealed no abnormalities. There was no evidence of pharyngitis. In the course of my looking at her throat, she made a great show of trying to clear her throat with no apparent production of anything. She spoke in a whisper most of the time. I am unable to hear the other side of the story, but the following portions of hers seem exaggerated. She states that some of the teachers and the principal smoke a great deal, particularly when she is in the vicinity. She has found a lighted cigar in the drawer of her desk. Some of her colleagues purposely smoke in her presence. If these things are not true, then there is obviously delusional content to her thoughts."

Mrs. Coven failed three times to keep appointments with the psychiatrist; her husband telephoned that she was too ill to appear. After being threatened with disciplinary action she reported, accompanied by her husband. She stated at the outset that her physician had advised her not to use her voice at all. The psychiatrist went on: "It is impossible, without a tape-recording, to convey how Mrs. Coven talked, how she verbally rolled, like water spilled across a table-top, all over the interview, with irrelevancies here and there, sudden changes of thought, interjections of comments that interrupted as I attempted to reply to some previous point that she had raised. Aggressively, in a

verbally flighty manner, she attempted to dominate and direct the interview. She was far more eager to tell me whatever she wanted me to know than to permit me to ask questions, which always seemed to her beside the immediate point she wanted me to understand . . . Whenever I countered her own verbal aggressiveness by a sharp tone or an insistence that we proceed my way, she briefly lost her constant smile grimace, her face flushed and clouded darkly, and she obviously was angry, although she said no angry words . . .

"I feel that the basic conflict in Mrs. Coven does not stem primarily from the chores and duties involved in her teaching children, which evidently she does in an outwardly quite satisfactory manner. On the contrary, her emotional disorder—reflected as it is in her multiple somatic complaints, her psychosomatic symptoms, her rather recently acquired alleged allergy to smoke, dust, etc., her intensity of mannerisms and speech, her flight of ideas, her apparent paranoid ideational structure, her legalistic and contentious attitudes—arises from conflicting instinctual matters far below the surface of her conscious awareness . . . The notations of her principal tend to support this thesis that the teacher's present emotional illness is one of gradual evolution. One wonders why some of these adjustment and behavior abberations were not reported by him earlier in the period of 'the last few years' he has been aware of them."

The "legalistic and contentious attitudes" the psychiatrist mentioned flowered in Mrs. Coven's final interview with the Superintendent who had insisted on her reporting for examination. Here is a brief segment of their interview:

"Superintendent: In the light of the reports I have before me, it is clear that you cannot render the services normally required of a teacher. You should retire.

"Mrs. Coven: Why don't you retire?

"Superintendent: I am not the person under discussion.

"Mrs. Coven: You will be before I get through with you. You

had no right to send me to a psychiatrist. I have a case against you.

"*Superintendent:* You may proceed with your case against me. In the meantime I am recommending that you be retired. If you do not report when called, I shall prefer charges of insubordination and you run the risk of being dismissed and therefore deprived of your retirement income. You may of course voluntarily apply for retirement.

"*Mrs. Coven:* Why don't you let my husband stay here with me during this interview?

"*Superintendent:* My business is with you, not with your husband.

"*Mrs. Coven:* My lawyer will make you sweat. I will sue you for libel and defamation of character."

The Superintendent permitted Mrs. Coven to talk, despite her racked "allergic" throat, for an hour and a half, before she left. The next day, she applied voluntarily for disability retirement.

The story of Mrs. Coven indicates the degree of influence a sick person can have upon a suggestible personality. Mrs. Coven was apparently accident-prone; to the doctor, she mentioned six accidents in the past 4 years. But within the past year, both she and her husband had fallen down a flight of stairs. It was her husband who called the psychiatrist to cancel Mrs. Coven's appointments; her husband accompanied her to all her interviews. The psychiatrist observed: "Her husband acted peculiarly, but under the circumstances I suppose his behavior might be regarded as appropriate. Whenever I made a note, he made a note. When I did no writing, neither did he, except that, if I made any definite statement to Mrs. Coven or attempted in a polite manner to stem the stream of her verbal inundations, he appeared to make a note of the occurrence." By the end of the long interview, the doctor's opinion grew more sure: "Due to the kind and degree of her husband's participation in her correspondence with the School Board and his constant accompaniment of her to any session with doctors or Board members, his note-taking, his

agreement with all she asserts, etc.—there is the very strong suggestion that we are here dealing with a husband-wife relationship best described as *folie à deux.* I quote from a textbook on psychiatry: 'Suggestibility plays a part, among other factors, in the genesis of *folie à deux,* or "communicated insanity," which is the term applied when two persons closely associated with one another suffer a psychosis simultaneously, and when one member of the pair appears to have influenced the other. It happens that paranoid and hypomanic patients not only can make those with whom they live close together believe in their delusions, but they so infect them that the latter under certain conditions themselves continue to build on the delusions.' "

Mrs. Coven, to the end of her teaching career, was regarded by her principal as effective and successful in the classroom. The psychiatrist himself wondered whether, "in view of her past good record," she ought not be placed on sabbatical leave for 6 months and then re-examined "before a final decision is reached whether or not to restore her to full-time teaching status." And one may wonder what effect, during those last years of unreported "behavior aberrations," Mrs. Coven was having not merely on her suggestible husband, but upon suggestible pupils in her classes.

12

Depression and Manic Depression

DEPRESSION MARKS A MOOD into which anyone may lapse. He is insensitive indeed who has never trudged on slow feet through the Slough of Despond. Dejection, however, ranges through many degrees; it may be grey with a mild downheartedness or approach a black-out of complete stupor. The properly adjusted person soon rouses himself from depression, to resume his duties. When depression is frequently recurrent or long-continued, it becomes a matter of major concern.

There are many ways in which depression affects the personality. It may express itself in a mood of sadness, or in a sense of futility. "Nothing I do seems to work out right." "What's the use of going on and on doing the same senseless things!" Or it may manifest itself in a pervasive pessimism, a feeling that our society, or the western world, or the whole planet, is going from bad to worse and might better be blotted out. Or there may be more personal lapses, such as forgetfulness, poor appetite, inability to concentrate, mental meandering, inability to persevere in a task or toward a goal. Sleeplessness is a frequent accompaniment of a depressed state, with consequent worry that aggravates the condition. From any of these manifestations, indeed, worry may naturally ensue, then anxiety, sense of guilt, self-accusation, remorse. It should be repeated that any of these conditions may be a justified consequence of an actual state of affairs in the life of a normal person. When several of them combine, or when they continue to press upon the teacher, they are danger signals.

Mrs. Dinah Ritter, aged 47, had been teaching in elementary school for 25 Satisfactory years. Then neighborhood talk grew active, and a group of parents called upon the principal. Parents of children in Miss Ritter's class, they complained, were being called to school very often, for long interviews. Most of these occurred during class hours, while the children sat without instruction. More recently Mrs. Ritter had taken to visiting parents at night, staying as late as 1:30 or 2, then asking to be escorted to the bus, or even all the way home. On several such occasions, she mentioned that she had not had dinner before arriving at her pupil's home.

Mrs. Ritter also kept her children in school long after hours. Sometimes she kept them at noon too late for the school hot lunch; occasionally, when children mentioned this, she gave them money to buy lunch outside. Similarly, she might keep a child too late in the afternoon for the school bus, and give her money for the public bus fare. The parents were worried just the same, for frequently their daughter had to walk alone past empty lots where perverts had frightened children.

The custodian told the principal that he often found the teacher with children in her room as late as 5 P.M.; she had asked him always to check her room in the evening, because once he had locked her in. Frequently, on checking, he found her asleep at her desk. On the occasion of a school play, she was in her room until 10:30 P.M., although she had no duties connected with the performance.

Mrs. Ritter was removed from the classroom and assigned to the office of the superintendent. After ignoring two appointments made for her with the school psychiatrist, Mrs. Ritter appeared, and stated: "I am very unhappy, so I decided to come and see you today." During the course of her interview, she emphasized this feeling: "I am not very happy. I feel that I am fine, but I am not happy. I have had a miserable summer. I get along with everybody. I now have second-generation children; I taught their

parents. The parents call me by my first name. I treat their children as though they were my own. But now I have had the most difficult year of my life."

Mrs. Ritter had had a previous record of marked depression, during which she was treated by a psychiatrist for "involutional melancholia (first and only depression), with 15 electroshock treatments, from which depression she improved much." That was 4 years earlier; in the interim her psychiatrist had continuously seen Mrs. Ritter professionally. He felt that her continuance in service "under careful supervision" would be "a kind act." Her husband also emphasized the therapeutic value of her classroom work, as a psychological stimulus to Mrs. Ritter.

The school psychologist, on interviewing Mrs. Ritter, said: "I am convinced she has shown a steady and progressive improvement in her emotional adjustment. There is no doubt that she has suffered from an episode of depression. She has practically regained 95% of her mental health. I have also taken into consideration her attitude toward teaching and the fine record as a teacher she has made in the past. I therefore recommend that she be returned to her post and resume teaching." The Medical Board differed, saying that as Mrs. Ritter was still convalescing from a second attack of involutional melancholia, and "in view of hypertension found at our last examination and recorded psychopathic behavior in school, we advise against return to teaching." The Superintendent declared: "This teacher does not and cannot exert a wholesome influence on children. She talks aimlessly and endlessly and is completely taken up with her personal problems. She has been ill for 4 years and is still under treatment; she is unfit to teach."

Mrs. Dinah Ritter was given a leave of absence of a term, and then retired.

While, of course, it is impossible at this distance to prognosticate Mrs. Ritter's chances of recovery had she been permitted to continue to teach, it should be observed that here is a

division of opinion and a clash of interest. The private psychiatrist and the school psychologist both thought that Mrs. Ritter could function effectively in the classroom, and that reassignment would fortify her own mental health. Contrary opinion prevailed. The well-being of the children was safeguarded at the expense of the teacher. Perhaps with wiser methods such conflicts can be more happily resolved.

Depression often recurs periodically. It may follow upon some heavy blow in a person's life, then become a permanent disabling condition. In such cases, especially when a loved one has died, the patient may reproach herself for not having taken the proper steps, the constant care, that might have prevented the death. Gradually this sense of neglect may turn into a sense of guilt; not having prevented the death, one sees oneself as having caused it. Such a pattern took a double toll in the case of Henrietta and Nancy Whiteside.

Henrietta Whiteside, aged 50, had 20 Satisfactory years as an elementary school teacher; her sister Nancy, aged 48, had for 18 years been a Satisfactory school clerk, in the same city in upper New York. Both of them, absent from school for 6 weeks after the death of their 78-year-old mother, were asked to appear for a medical examination. Their appearance and behavior led the doctor to request a psychiatric examination, the report of which reads, in part:

"The general appearance of the sisters was singularly striking in a funereal sort of way. Tall, thin, angular, they both wore large black hats, black dresses, shoes and stockings. Their complexions were sallow; they wore no make-up. The face of Nancy was drawn in lines of agitation, anguish, and remorse. Her skin superficially resembled oily parchment and, to a lesser degree, so did her sister's. They refused to be interviewed separately. Henrietta remained quietly seated, while Nancy paced back and forth, back and forth, during the entire session. Tears often welled up

in Nancy's eyes as she recounted her version of the history. Henrietta looked sad and concerned, but showed far less overt agitated display. Her trend, however, continued the identical misconceptions, misinterpretations, and fixed ideas one heard from her sister. There was one notable difference. Henrietta insisted, rather passively and without vocal vigor, that *she* was responsible for the death of her mother. Nancy insisted to the contrary: 'I did it. It was the Epsom salts I gave her!' "

Henrietta declared: "I cut the lamp chop into small pieces, but my mother ate it without her false teeth, so that it was undigested. This, along with the salmon I gave her the next day, caused her to get constipated and that's why I am responsible. I killed my mother."

Nancy's version was that the Epsom salts she gave her mother were not marked "USP." After her mother's death, they had the salts analyzed for poison but were told there was none. They spent over $20 in long-distance telephone calls trying to locate the manufacturer of this apparently unapproved brand. Nancy stated that no other drugstore where she inquired carried the brand, and that the druggist from whom she had bought it threatened her with a summons if she continued to bother him.

Both sisters, before the Superintendent and the Retirement Board, were adamant in their conviction that they had murdered their mother. The psychiatrist stated: "The duration of a recoverable case of such depression varies from 6 months to 4 years. With increasing agitation and depression, suicide is a probability in untreated cases . . . My impression is that these sisters do not fall in the recoverable group . . ."

Henrietta and Nancy Whiteside were retired.

No record is available of their later history. But without inquiry as to whether there were relatives to look after them, these two sisters, with suicide "a probability," were thrust from their life-work, which might—with proper treatment—have helped draw them from their melancholia, and were left to their own

obviously insufficient resources of morale. Surely humane retirement regulations will include some way of making sure that the mentally disturbed teacher, after removal from the system, is watched over and helped.

The manic-depressive is one who experiences alternate states of mania and melancholia. The former is a period in which the person is excessively excitable, overjoyous, overactive, overtalkative, overenergetic; the latter, a period of deepest gloom. "The bluest blue mood of the normal person is a bright rainbow compared with the hopeless darkness" of the melancholia of the manic-depressive. In the manic state the sufferer, while she has the sense of exceptional well-being, actually attains no objective because she constantly changes her goal. Her desires constantly shift. In the depressive state, desire dwindles, apathy darkens toward despair, and the condition may end in suicide. Fortunately, in most cases, the manic mood surges back before total darkness sets in.

Mark Masters was born in Madison, Wisconsin. The family moved to an adjoining state where he grew up. At 45 he had been for 20 years a Satisfactory high-school teacher of French. "He is a friendly person," said the superintendent's report, "ever ready to lend a helping hand. But he lacks selective discrimination and applies equal energy to all tasks, at great physical and mental cost. One cannot be angry with him because he is so eager to please . . . He talks endlessly, without point, and unconcerned whether he holds the attention of his hearers."

Mr. Masters had taken courses in phonetics, and worked on a phonetic method of teaching French through the use of songs. He learned to play the accordion and wrote over 400 songs. He collected material from newspapers and magazines, and spent after-school and week-end hours mimeographing copy to supplement the school material. The department chairman told Mr. Masters that his material was "fine," but not worth all that effort.

Mr. Masters continued to bring in stencils, so frequently that his chairman could not check them, and the principal told Mr. Masters to stop the extra work and do the best he could with the textbooks.

Mr. Masters applied for a sabbatical leave, for restoration of health. He said that he was tense, felt frustrated, and for the first time in his career found himself scolding his pupils. He planned to spend his sabbatical leave readying more supplementary material.

To the psychiatrist, Mark Masters complained of frequent frustration, while in the next breath he averred that he had learned to discipline himself so as to handle any situation. "He has apparently no awareness of any disturbance in his emotional and mental reactions, despite the fact that his expansive mood, verbal overproductiveness, and rush of ideas indicate such a disturbance. He talked at great length about a wide variety of subjects, with grandiose notions of his ability to teach languages, music and art. Mr. Masters declared: 'I have been thoroughly dynamic and have more energy than I can use . . . I have worked out a system to teach language even to those that do not go to school.' *Diagnosis*: Manic-depressive psychosis, hypomanic state, chronic, progressive."

Two years after his retirement, Mr. Masters was living in Canada, where he had married a Canadian girl. He wrote: "I am teaching her several languages by the phonetic method and she loves it."

A person in the manic period of a manic-depressive cycle may seem flighty at times, but will often give the impression of a pleasant, warm-hearted person, abounding in energy, eager to work and capable. Only closer observation by an understanding supervisor may discern the basic instability, the lack of coherent and persistent drive, beneath the show of energy. The history of such a person must be carefully weighed.

The superintendent who interviewed Mrs. Ethel Schwab, on her application for reinstatement as an elementary school teacher in Ohio, was most favorably impressed. Although of almost Valkyrie proportions, she had both beauty and charm. She spoke with enthusiasm of her desire to teach again, and of her especial interest in psychiatric and delinquent children. As he talked with her, the superintendent found it hard to believe that she was the woman described in the psychiatric report that lay on his desk.

Mrs. Schwab had twice been in a sanitarium, with spells of deep depression broken by spells of violent rebellion. Her record for many years indicated very high spirits or very low spirits, with normal intervals between. Her life story, apart from (yet perhaps to some extent accounting for) these variations, was a picture of varied confusion.

After her father's death while she was still a young girl in teacher-training school, Ethel married a college student, mainly to avoid living with her mother, whom she deemed unloving. After 2 years of teaching, she was drawn to a fellow teacher, a woman apparently of inferior qualities, but who satisfied Ethel's need for praise and flattery. During the year and a half that this affair lasted, Ethel lost interest in sex relations with her husband. When he attempted to interfere, on three occasions she left him, but always returned and ultimately, though reluctantly, gave up her friend. Within the year she was on intimate terms with a Mr. Tybalt. When her husband found this out, she went abroad to decide which she loved most. In Paris, she met a man younger than herself, with whom she had intimate relations. An abortion followed. She grew increasingly unhappy, and decided to return to her husband.

At home again, friction soon developed. She thought her husband unsympathetic; renewed her relations with Mr. Tybalt; felt that her husband was unreasonable in refusing to share her; and on the advice of a psychologist took an apartment by herself.

Two more abortions followed. All this time, Ethel was still teaching.

During the summer, she again renewed her relations with Mr. Tybalt, but was suspicious that the elevator man and neighbors were spying on her, and in September increased suspiciousness, insomnia, and restless depression led to her admission to a sanitarium. At the time of this first admission, she was 28.

After several weeks, Ethel was discharged and returned to her teaching. She was, in the next few years, divorced and remarried, and had a son. After maternity leave, she went back to the classroom. She continued visiting her psychiatrist, but after a few years he decided that the personal relationship developing between them made it preferable for Ethel to seek another doctor. She became depressed and ill-tempered. For fear of mistreating her son, she would go from school to a motion picture house, returning home when the boy was ready for bed. Her disturbed condition increased. One night when her husband was out Ethel became hysterical and began throwing things out the window; Mr. Schwab returned to discover she had been taken to the hospital. At the time of this second admission to the sanitarium, her son was 5½, and Ethel was 39.

Within a week, she was much better and eager to go back teaching. "Sometimes it takes a sock on the jaw," she said, "to make a person like me realize the horrors of letting myself go. I've had my sock on the jaw."

Mrs. Schwab's principal, in connection with her application for reinstatement as a teacher, wrote: "Mrs. Ethel Schwab taught here for 4 years. She was a good teacher, well liked by children and parents. I heard that she has been seriously ill, tuberculosis I believe, and has had to take a prolonged rest in a sanitarium. I am glad to learn that she has recovered, and I shall be glad to welcome her back to my school. I shall not give her a heavy pupil load, so as not to overburden her."

The psychiatric report concluded: *"Diagnosis:* Manic-depressive, manic. *Condition:* Recovered.

"This woman has apparently recovered from an acute upset but is a very unstable person and is very apt to become upset if something unpleasant happens. She states that she is interested in teaching psychiatric and delinquent children. The question arises as to whether this woman, in her own unstable state, is capable of teaching unstable children, or for that matter stable ones."

When the Superintendent in charge refused to recommend Mrs. Ethel Schwab's reinstatement, she declared that he was unjust, dictatorial, and "as narrow-minded as a sixteenth-century monk."

It is a question whether children are more disturbed by the strain of a teacher sunk in deep depression, or by the spurts of energy of the manic mood. The latter are more immediately dangerous, because persons in this mood, if contradicted, often grow violent.

13

Anxiety

ALTHOUGH A DEGREE OF WORRY seems inevitable in every life, its deepening to anxiety is less frequent. Often, in this world prone to accidents and exigencies, worry is justified by external conditions. It is when worry is protracted beyond the event, or seems to rise frequently without adequate grounds and to continue with vague though heavy apprehensions, that it calls for discerning and sympathetic supervision.

Life is composed of tensions. These frequently lead to fear, which is a reasonable apprehension of a known danger. When fear grows excessive or constantly recurrent, it is called phobia. Anxiety, on the other hand, is apprehension regarding unknown dangers, major dangers imagined or but vaguely grasped. It may be the transformed manifestation of an unconscious aggressive impulse. When anxiety grows excessive, it becomes panic, a state in which the controls of reason have failed. Anxiety corresponds in the mental realm to pain in the physical; it is a warning that something, usually inside us, is threatening our well-being. And often, as *Robinson Crusoe* remarks, "we find the burden of anxiety greater, by much, than the evil we are anxious about."

Since anxiety must have an object, and there is no sufficient basis for the feeling, one must be found. Hence the sufferer from an anxiety state will usually manifest other symptoms of mental disturbance. These may range from a mild but continuous self-pity to the full spread of delusions.

In Miss Lucy Reston, an elementary school teacher aged 49, who had been Satisfactory through 25 years, a brooding self-pity kept her listless and inattentive in the classroom, until four pupils went to the principal as a committee, bearing a note: "Our class would like to have a new teacher, for the teacher we have now does not approve to us." Miss Reston retorted: "The boys are bad; they come from broken homes. I have gone to the homes to try to correct conditions. Do you think they are grateful? . . . The boys go to the principal and complain about me." To the doctor, she added: "I have cried in the classroom. I cry when the principal criticizes me. She hounds me. Everything seems to go wrong."

Miss Lucy Reston was retired.

Such a worried teacher may be going through a difficult period, a time of emotional or physical stress; sympathetic help may bring her through to renewed faith and vigor. This seemed to be the case with Miss Harriet Moreland who, at the age of 47, with 22 years of Satisfactory elementary-school service in Michigan, showed classroom weaknesses coincidental with her menopause. She was troubled with fatigue and "hot flashes."

Miss Moreland, complaining that the children did not appreciate her and that the principal, in spite of her long fine record, showed no understanding, sought and was granted a transfer. After 3 months, her district superintendent reported:

"I placed Miss Moreland in Beecher School, one of our best schools, where the average conduct is excellent. After a short time, the principal called my attention to the fact that Miss Moreland seemed to be ill. She was nervous and fidgety with the children. She complained of being tired; her doctor told her not to exert herself. When the principal suggested that she read a bulletin, she would state: 'I know I should, but I know I won't read it.' We have received complaining letters from parents about the quality of Miss Moreland's teaching. The easiest thing for me

to do would be to mark the teacher Unsatisfactory, but this does not seem to be a proper procedure any more than it would be right to mark an ill child a failure. It is my sincere belief that this teacher cannot exert the energy to improve herself, not because she will not but because she is too ill to do so. It would, therefore, seem cruel and unnecessary to mark her Unsatisfactory. On the other hand, it is equally cruel and unsatisfactory to waste the time of the children in her class."

At the superintendent's suggestion, Miss Moreland was given medical and psychiatric examinations, and a leave of absence for the rest of the Spring term. The psychiatrist noted that "her discussion of her present illness is conspicuously vague and almost evasive. She seems to be burdened by an anxiety that she will neither express nor attach to any basis in the conduct of her pupils or her principal."

A psychiatric re-examination in the Fall concluded: "Miss Moreland seems much improved in her composure, contact, and capacity for intelligent communication. She has apparently gained some insight into the fact that she had passed through an emotional disturbance connected with the menopause. She is at present willing and eager to return to her work. There is some suggestion of mild uneasiness with respect to her record and I believe that, if it be practical for you, her transfer to a different school might permit of the resolution of her tensions."

Miss Harriet Moreland was assigned to teach in another school. Again, in 4 months, the district superintendent reported: "My direction to the new principal was to ignore everything that had happened in Miss Moreland's past, and to give her the same consideration and warm help he would give a beginner. Mr. Bernard and his assistant are friendly supervisors, who have built up a reputation for the consideration and help they give to their teachers.

"I regret to say, however, that Miss Moreland just cannot be helped. She is nervous in class, apparently fearful of the children

or of some undefined menace. If she is allowed to continue to teach, I can see no other prospect than her ultimate collapse."

The report elaborated: "While Miss Moreland appears willing and even eager to accept instructions, she rapidly forgets even the most intensive type of instruction, or it is possible that, without being conscious of it, she resists or is passively obstinate. There are periods of time during which Miss Moreland seems entirely engrossed in herself. Then her instructions to her class are purposeless and extremely mechanical. She will say to a child, 'Go on,' when there is nothing to go on to. The silence may rouse her for a short time, then she may give the class a writing assignment and sink into her brooding again. Whoever is persuading Miss Moreland to remain teaching is doing her a great disservice. Health leaves of absence will not solve the problem."

Miss Moreland nevertheless applied for and was granted a leave of absence for restoration of health. At the end of her leave, she was again examined. The medical report, pointing out that "Miss Moreland shows either evasion or blocking when questioned about her symptoms and her school relations," advised a psychiatric interview. The psychiatrist declared: "It is admitted by her that over a period of many years she has been a chronic worrier and one in whom anxiety has played a great part even though outwardly, she states, she looks like a very relaxed person."

It was apparent that the inner anxiety was gnawing away at the outer pretense of ease. For the psychiatrist found considerable mental deterioration, especially in the form of memory impairment. Miss Moreland gave contradictory answers as to when she had left school, and could not recall, even roughly, how many months she had spent in her last school. "She was unable to name the President of the United States during the Civil War, had marked difficulty in naming a single one of the Presidents, even when I gave her the first name. She stumbled over naming the months of the year backwards, although I told her to take all

the time she wished; and she was very slow, with numerous errors, counting down from 100 subtracting 7."

Although Miss Moreland said she had been and was capable of carrying on well in the classroom, the psychiatrist felt that she should have further tests: "an X-ray of her skull, an electroencephalogram, Wasserman and blood chemistry, spinal fluid, and whatever else may be indicated after these primary testings." The Retirement Board, without power or funds to proceed further, recommended that Miss Moreland's family undertake these probings. Miss Harriet Moreland was retired.

There are, as has been noted, times when the opinion of the examining psychiatrist differs from that of the lay officials of the Retirement Board or of the school authorities. It would be presumptuous of an outsider, even if he knew both parties, to pretend to sit in judgment between them. One may, however, point out the possible cause of any difference in judgment. The psychiatrist, even when serving a school system, examines an individual; his lifelong attitude and his dedication to professional ideals impel him to consider what is best for that individual. Thus, when the doctor protests, as he frequently does, that the condition should have been brought to psychiatric attention years before, he means that, had the case been reported in time, the teacher's emotional and mental disturbance might have been properly diagnosed and treated.

The educators who have to vote on a teacher's retirement, on the other hand, and also the city officers on the Retirement Board, while by no means lacking consideration for the teacher, must have the interest of the children and the community primarily at heart. The psychiatrist may feel that it would be kind to allow a teacher to return to the classroom "under close supervision and with frequent report." The educator knows that no supervision can be constant, that violence takes but a moment to flare, that there is little use in a report after the damage has

been done, that in "taking a chance" all the risk is to young lives. "Kindness" to the teacher may be cruelty to the children.

Such a divided judgment developed when Sadie Wheelock wanted to return to active duty.

Sadie Wheelock, aged 46, had taught for 25 Satisfactory years in the same New England school. When she went for a physical examination after a month's absence, the doctor reported: "Patient has a frequent twitch of the right shoulder. When asked a question she was unable to talk, even after 2 minutes of grimaces, heaving sobs, and crying. Finally she said: 'It's just no use' and continued to cry."

Sent to the psychiatrist, Mrs. Wheelock said, in part: "I have worked all the time in the same school. I got along very well with three principals. The new principal seems to resent me. The children all love me and come to me all the time. The principal once put her arm around a child who drew away and threw her arms around me. The principal got very upset about this. She said to me: 'You are going to get sick. I want you to take a transfer. You are going to fight me. I'm going to put pressure on you. You are going to get sick!'" Mrs. Wheelock told about having "a sad experience with a foreign man" one morning on her way to school. She also stated that her mother had had a serious accident 3 years before, which made Mrs. Wheelock very nervous and tense. The next December, she fell on an icy patch in front of the school. The new principal, she said, reported that the fall was due to "a weak spell. I have never had any weak spells." She also said that one day she was driving with her husband in their car; when she noticed that they were approaching the school she became so nervous, shaking all over, that her husband had to take her home.

Mrs. Wheelock then—forgetting her earlier words—blamed her nervousness entirely upon the new principal. She declared that the principal had accused a boy of stealing a nickel from a classmate, had made him take off his shoes, searched him, and got him

into such a nervous state that he was taken to the hospital, where he was kept under observation for 3 months. She said the other teachers begged her to ask for a transfer, before the principal drove her into a nervous breakdown. "The principal's name is Miss Tinker, and everybody calls her Miss Stinker."

The psychiatrist's report concluded: "Mrs. Wheelock has a definite and severe anxiety hysteria. She gets into a panic when she thinks of returning to her present school. On the other hand, she resents the fact that she is obliged to seek a transfer after working in one school for 25 years. She is now emotionally disturbed, and unable to do her work. I recommend that she be given a month or two of leave and then transferred to some other school."

The Retirement Committee unanimously recommended that Mrs. Sadie Wheelock be retired.

Apparently a deep-rooted anxiety may persist in a mild form for many years, marking one's personality but with no manifest disabling effects, until either an emotional blow such as a loved one's death lets loose its power or the processes of aging weaken the forces of resistance. Mr. Milquetoast may be a pleasant and certainly harmless enough man, albeit a bit of a bore. Watch him unawares, and he may seem anxious, frightened, sad. But he is extremely polite. His aim in life is to please. And he may play this role acceptably, all his life. Or he may strive in vain.

No supervisors pressed action upon Mr. Kent Alton, aged 46, with 25 years of Satisfactory service in Rhode Island; of his own accord he requested leave of absence for personal illness, to be followed by a transfer to another school. The doctor found "Anxiety state, severe; hearing loss; deficient diet; severe insomnia," and recommended the leave.

Finding the same severe anxiety state when Mr. Alton's leave was over, the doctor requested a psychiatric examination.

Mr. Alton's past showed a loveless childhood. After his father's death Kent, then 9, was in an orphanage for 6 years. Now, however, in spite of the fact that he had two well-to-do brothers, Kent had the whole burden of the support of his 80-year-old mother.

In the asylum, Kent had developed breathing difficulties; because of these, the orphanage doctor arranged for him to go to a summer camp. The trouble never really left him, he complained to the psychiatrist: "Many a time, for many years, when lying horizontally, I have not been able to breathe. I've had to prop myself up with pillows, at night in bed, in order to catch my breath. I've gotten up repeatedly, to drink fruit juices—gallons of them. Drinking them seems to widen the nasal membrane, so that I breathe better for an hour or two."

The psychiatrist observed that Kent Alton had "an obsessive-compulsive personality, which is deeply conflicted on an unconscious level. Through the mental mechanism of conversion, he has unconsciously converted his inner emotional distress into respiratory symptoms . . . This man has lived and taught classes successfully for many years while harboring a deep-seated and pervading psychoneurosis. He held together until he reached the psychological involutional era of life, when many of his ordinary defenses against anxiety failed him . . . It is quite likely that if the change in schools he has requested is granted, he will continue to function efficiently as a teacher. It will furnish him with an environmental prop with which to defend himself further against the threat of his anxieties."

Mr. Alton was transferred. But his anxiety was stronger than his resistance. After 3 months he requested, of his own volition, another talk with the psychiatrist. He spoke, however, of his "physical" difficulties, worried lest they bring him before the Retirement Committee. "If that should happen," he said, "I have come here today to tell you that I am trying my very best, as I have always done. That is all I want to be sure everybody

understands. I have never had any blemishes on my record in all these years, and if I am to be rated Unsatisfactory, it will be in spite of my doing all I can to do my best. The new principal is a very tough man; the children are very hard to handle. Unless conditions are made easy, I simply can't go on."

Mr. Alton stated that he now spent every week-end mimeographing work for the students, because his breathing difficulty produced voice fatigue, and by mid-morning he couldn't speak strongly enough to conduct the lessons orally. "I have a throbbing headache most of the time. I feel as though I have a heavy load pressing on my head. Maybe something is growing in my head, bits of growth inside, instead of the former way when little lumps used to come out on the skin of my face. Lately, I have felt sure that my head has shrunk in size—I can span my forehead, now, with my fingers . . . I'm very conscientious; but the other teachers are so active and vital. I've heard the pupils call me 'Grandpop' and 'Dracula.' This voice of mine fails me. That's why I wanted the earliest morning appointment with you."

The psychiatrist noted: "Mr. Alton is rapidly shifting from a lifelong obsessive-compulsive and hypochondriacal neurotic adjustment to life into the prodromal phases of a disabling involution reaction which may later reach frank psychotic proportions." With Mr. Alton's permission, this report was sent to the Retirement Committee.

Before the Committee, Mr. Alton sighed frequently, and several times was on the verge of tears. He declared: "I know I am a failure, but I try very hard. It is my voice, I guess. I'm not the aggressive type, and my pupils take advantage of me. They are very cruel and unsympathetic. They call me names; I can't stand up to them. Some of the boys are big fellows; I'm afraid of them. The girls are even worse; they are very rough with me, and laugh at me. I am nice to them, but it's no use."

The Committee expressed great sympathy for Kent Alton, but found no alternative save to recommend his retirement.

The basic anxieties find many masks. Not all of these are ugly, or even revelatory. Some of them prove, for long periods of time, acceptable substitutes for any direct facing of reality. The nervous and fearful person has found an anchor, a fixed "fact"—whatever the delusion may be—on which to center her anxiety, and thus can live better with it than when it is vague and unattached. Driving all her worries along this single line of thought, she may even be able to continue teaching year after year, without reaching a crisis that calls attention to her, continuatively but quietly incompetent.

Miss Selma Giles, at 62, was a gentle little white-haired woman of old-world charm. She had been unfit to teach for many years, but in her 35 years as an elementary-school teacher in Washington, she had never been rated Unsatisfactory, and she was finally brought to official attention through conduct outside of school. Her anxiety was a comparatively minor aspect of her affliction.

Parents and teachers came to the principal with stories she had told them of her worries about the behavior of Mrs. Eiden, housekeeper at the Hotel Cumberland, where she had formerly lived. While a tenant there, she had given Mrs. Eiden a fur coat and gifts of money—$20 or more at a time—that amounted to about $3,000. Asked why, she said: "I gave it to keep peace; I gave it to keep my life."

When Miss Giles left that hotel Mrs. Eiden, and then her son, followed her, the teacher declared. They set up a radar contact. When she was living at the Hotel Victoria, "the woman came along in disguise, in dark glasses, carrying a Coca Cola box with fish on top and ice-packed. The ice was the radar." Miss Giles fled to the YWCA, but on the second night they caught up with her. She went to the Hotel George, the Normandy, the Elizabeth. At the Elizabeth, she had a corner room, and from the house across the way "I got a poke in the back and near my heart like a sudden sting. It came from the radar machine; I could see it."

Miss Giles went to the police twice. "I showed the police what was in my shoes; both shoes had them, little feathers. The policeman took them out of my shoes, and told me that two men sitting beside him were detectives and would take care of me. This was Saturday morning. I cried bitterly. The detective said, 'Go back to your hotel.' I stayed in my room. Each night, it was like hell on earth."

During a period of 6 months, Miss Giles lived at eight hotels, even spending one night sitting in the railroad station. The Superintendent asked for a report on her classroom work, following Miss Giles' arrest on a charge of vagrancy.

The principal's report said that children in Miss Giles' class often asked to have their teacher changed. When this request was granted, four out of the five most boisterous ones made good adjustments with their new teacher. Miss Giles stated that she had never had difficulty with discipline or unpleasant contacts with parents, but that a relative of Mrs. Eiden, "the radar woman," lived in the neighborhood and instigated the children's misbehavior. The principal continued: "Passing her room, I have seen Miss Giles sitting with her eyes closed while a pupil was acting as class leader. Becoming aware of me, she would open her eyes and appear to listen to what was said . . . When her class was watching a film strip, Miss Giles sat while a child read the titles. Miss Giles made no additional comments . . . I observed an arithmetic lesson in which Miss Giles failed to follow the grade lesson plan for the day, but spent the period going over work she had already covered. Twice she sent a child out to see the time. In 15 minutes, she announced a period for relaxation, and permitted the children to walk about the room. Some of them stopped at the map. Miss Giles asked questions about names of states and their capitals. The pupils did not answer correctly but the teacher said nothing . . . Miss Giles was unable to write out her class program card. The Class Analysis Sheet was completely

beyond her power, though she was given specific instructions and help with it."

It is significant that Miss Giles had always been rated Satisfactory, and that these difficulties and deficiencies were not called to official attention until an inquiry was instituted after the teacher's arrest.

When the Superintendent interviewed Miss Giles, he was aghast. Here are brief excerpts from their lengthy talk:

"*Question:* Where did you sleep last night?

"*Answer:* At the Munsey House.

"*Q:* Did you give anybody any money at the Munsey House?

"*A:* No. I've learned my lesson.

"*Q:* Would you say you are "an easy mark"?

"*A:* No, I am not. I am sympathetic, and when people appeal to me I try to do what is in my power to help them.

"*Q:* Suppose my secretary, Miss Johnson, said: 'Miss Giles, I need money very badly. I must have a fur coat.'

"*A:* I don't know this lady.

"*Q:* Suppose you did know her, and she appealed to you?

"*A:* I'd give to anybody if they appealed to me.

"*Q:* Even a fine mink coat?

"*A:* No. I wouldn't go in as deep as mink.

"*Q:* What would you give her? What kind of fur?

"*A:* A short beaver coat.

"*Q:* Why not mink?

"*A:* I couldn't afford it. The beaver coat I have. I have it in storage. May I say something? Well, I think we all make mistakes in our lives, and that has gone and I have forgotten about it.

"*Q:* What was your mistake?

"*A:* I gave out money lavishly. I gave it out as a human kindness.

"*Q:* Would you say you gave Mrs. Eiden thousands of dollars?

"*A:* I figured it out. It was about $3,000, in 3½ years.

"*Q:* Did she actually give you any service?

"*A:* Not any at all. Of course I am well and don't really need service.

"*Q:* I'm still not clear why you gave this woman all that money.

"*A:* Well, she asked for it.

"*Q:* Why did you give it to her?

"*A* (after hesitating): I thought that maybe sometime I might need her services . . .

"*Q:* Tell me, what subjects do you teach?

"*A:* We had stamps to learn the Presidents. The children brought in stamps and got the Presidents in order, and they knew them very well.

"*Q:* What did you teach in geography?

"*A:* In geography we had North America.

"*Q:* Suppose a child were to ask you the distance from New York to London?

"*A:* We had a scale and we took our rulers and measured the distance with the scale.

"*Q:* Suppose a child asked you the distance, what would you say?

"*A:* I'd ask several to guess.

"*Q:* Suppose they couldn't guess; what would you tell them?

"*A:* I'd look it up.

"*Q:* Can you guess now?

"*A:* About 50,000 miles.

"*Q:* When would you say George Washington was born?

"*A:* He was 31 before the War: 1776.

"*Q:* When do you think he was born?

"*A:* Around 1779 or 1780.

"*Q:* Do you teach the Revolutionary War?

"*A:* I don't think I teach the Revolutionary War. I think this is a new set of books.

"*Q:* Let's forget about the books. You are an American, and are interested in your country. You know the history of your country.

"*A:* I did when I was studying it myself. We have some lovely maps in our room.

"*Q:* Who were some of the English generals in the Revolutionary War?

"*A:* Rock.

"*Q:* Who were some other generals?

"*A:* Really, Doctor, it isn't fresh in my mind.

"*Q:* Do you know some of the American generals?

"*A:* George Washington.

"*Q:* Did you ever hear about Benjamin Franklin?

"*A:* Yes. Benjamin Franklin and the cotton gin and Benjamin Franklin electricity.

"*Q:* Benjamin Franklin and the cotton gin?

"*A:* Oh, I mean Eli Whitney and Robert Fulton—steam, the Erie Canal and Henry Hudson—the Hudson River.

"*Q:* When did Henry Hudson go up the Hudson River?

"*A:* 1609, a few years before George Washington.

"*Q:* A few years before George Washington?

"*A:* Albany is now the capital. My children know the capitals very well.

"*Q:* You say Hudson—

"*A:* He discovered the Hudson River. Florida—Ponce de Leon—The Fountain of Youth . . .

"*Q:* Do you teach arithmetic?

"*A:* Yes. 3 times 2 and 2 times 3 . . .

"*Q:* How would you teach this problem: *If 3 pencils cost 18 cents, what will 17 pencils cost?*

"*A:* Times—multiplication.

"*Q:* You do the problem.

"*A:* Divide 18 into 17 and add zero and the large number into the small number.

"*Q:* Go ahead and do it.

"*A:* 17 will go into 180—7 times 3 is 21. It is too much.

"*Q:* Here is a pad.

"*A* (after writing a few figures): I could do the problem if you gave me even numbers . . ."

Miss Selma Giles was questioned briefly by the Retirement Board, and was retired. She had been sweetly incompetent for years, without any action by the school authorities.

The previous cases make it abundantly clear that, as schools are supervised today, a teacher may continue in the classroom long after her capability as a guide to children has lapsed. The Satisfactory rating manifestly may cover a multitude of sins. It may be that deterioration in mental power, or teaching ability, or disciplinary control comes gradually, so that it is hard to pinpoint the actual time when the teacher became unfit. On the other hand, in an astonishingly large number of cases the principal (after circumstances outside the classroom and the school have brought the teacher to higher official notice) discovers that the classroom activity has also been inferior, of a sort that has aroused pupil resentment and parental protest, of a sort that brings into question the desirability of continuing the teacher in service. These shortcomings existed before the extraneous problem focussed attention on the teacher. Not to report them is a disservice to the teacher, to the children, to the well-being of the community and the prestige of the schools.

In ways often too subtle to be observed and to bring corrective action, teachers troubled by anxiety may be dangerous. A troubled teacher infects the children in her class. Neurosis breeds neurosis. So widespread in our time are the anxiety neuroses that ours has been called "the age of anxiety." A teacher thus troubled will face classroom situations in a way that may lead to future harmful attitudes in the children. Minor classroom emergencies are common; for example, a child falls and bumps his head.

The easily alarmed and quickly anxious teacher may respond in either of two excessive ways. She may at once seek to shelter the class from the fears of the moment, which she feels too strongly. Her very concern for the children will make them feel that anxiety is a dread thing, to be avoided at all costs; anxiety, as Dr. William Glasser italicizes in *Mental Health or Mental Illness?* (1961), *"is made so fearful and so dangerous* that the child is not able to develop effective ego defenses to handle his fear." On the other hand, the troubled teacher may run directly to the crying child, in a fluttery and oversolicitous effort to soothe and to help him. This more immediately communicates her fears to the children.

Either of these approaches may lead to the development of an improper attitude, a too easily aroused anxiety, in the children, which will affect their reaction to alarms all through life. It requires the poised response of a well-controlled teacher to induce proper attitudes in a class.

14

Gross Physical Disorderliness

MANY PERSONS ARE BY NATURE, or through lack of training, disorderly; their bureau drawers and desks present a confused agglomeration of materials, amid which the owner can somehow find the desired object. Most of us have at least heard, if we haven't uttered, the complaint: "Someone's straightened out my room, and now I can't find a thing!"

The poet has spoken, in other connection, of "a sweet disorder in the dress." Too meticulous a concern that each thing have a special place, and be in it, is the mark of a pedant or a prig. The teacher who had her classes bring rulers so that the left-hand margin of their composition papers could be drawn 1¾ inches wide, the right margin ¾ inch, was looked upon as a fusspot. The French teacher who wore a laboratory smock in his classroom "because the school is dirty" was considered finical if not downright queer. Teachers who put plastic cuff guards over their dress sleeves are likely to seem prissy old maids in their pupils' eyes. Neatness does not demand a rigid or extreme concern.

Disorder, on the other hand, may go too far. It may consist simply of a good thing in the wrong place, as when a principal reported: "Miss Tillson wears sports clothes entirely inappropriate for school. She comes to the classroom as though to the country club." Here, of course, there may be a question of taste; in the miniature world of the classroom one should look smart rather than dowdy. But there is a degree of general slovenliness,

a manner of dress, that betrays indifference, heedlessness, or deeper disorder within. Thus "Mr. Norman's coat is buttonless; he wears a dirty sweater; his shirt is frayed; he is rarely clean-shaven."

When this pattern becomes established, it is likely that classroom troubles will ensue. The danger of not checking such disorder at the start is manifest in a principal's too-long-deferred complaint, beginning: "Miss Edman comes to school in a dirty shirtwaist or sweater. Her clothes are in need of repair, and the children laugh at her. This has been going on for a great many years, and although I have spoken to her over and over about her appearance, she has not changed. In addition, she is grossly overweight (210 pounds). During the last few years she has had a great deal of trouble with the pupils; she calls them names, pushes them around, and is getting into difficulties with aroused parents." Miss Edman, like many other such slovenly and troublesome teachers, had always been rated Satisfactory. Such an example must lead the children toward carelessness and disorder.

It takes considerable courage, apparently, and forthright concern for the well-being of his pupils, for a principal to report a teacher who has not broken into overt and violent disorder. Thus Miss Genevieve Holt's principal stated in his report: "The principal who preceded me warned me about Miss Holt. He told me she was 'nuts.' He didn't report her because he wasn't going to 'stick his neck out.' I am obliged to request that she be examined, because she upsets the office and school for days at a time." But this report was filed after the principal had been in the school more than 2 years.

Miss Genevieve Holt was then 46, and had been a Satisfactory school clerk in New York State for 14 years. She was always rated Satisfactory despite the fact that, as the superintendent finally noted, "Her general appearance is untidy and even dirty. Her hair needs care; her hands and face need washing;

her fingernails need cleaning and manicuring. Her dress and sweater are torn. A front tooth is missing, and a bridge that has become loose makes a clacking noise when she speaks. From time to time she puts both hands to her mouth to adjust the bridge. She wears a large table alarm clock tied to her wrist by means of straps. When questioned as to why she wears it, she replied: 'I was frequently late, and my principal scolded me, so I bought the alarm clock.' 'Has your punctuality improved?' 'No. It makes so much noise that I haven't wound it up. It made me nervous.' "

None of this, however, impelled her supervisors to bring Miss Holt to medical attention. She had to reach a more aggressive stage, with apparent hallucinations: "For the last 4 months, Miss Holt has complained that she smelled gas fumes in the office. I questioned four or five people in the office, but neither they nor I could detect a gas odor. Miss Holt thereupon said: 'I don't care if you ask 100 or 200 people; I smell gas!' To check further, I called in a man from the Gas Company; he also stated that there was no odor of gas.

"Miss Holt keeps the windows wide open because of the 'gas fumes,' so that it becomes too cold for others to work in the office. She states that she will not work in the office otherwise, come what may."

Once the decision is made to file a report, it often grows heavy with complaints: "Miss Holt's attitude has always been antagonistic. Despite the fact that I always speak to her in a friendly manner, her replies are generally of the 'chip on the shoulder' type. Her colleagues in the office fear and resent her. At one time, a very efficient substitute clerk left the school because of Miss Holt's sharp tongue, which she has never learned to control." As the clerk is usually the first person in a school to whom a visitor speaks, this characteristic is hardly likely to increase respect for the school.

Found in Miss Holt's locker and brought to the psychiatrist

was a 6-page typed legal portfolio. The psychiatrist wrote: "She showed immediate belligerence and hostility when the subject of her 'manuscript' was brought up. Her attitude was one of instant bristling; she stated firmly that this was her private life which had no bearing on the hearing and that she therefore would not discuss the manuscript in any way. Though this was perhaps within her legal right, the important factor is that Miss Holt's hostility, belligerence, and defensiveness were out of proportion to the occasion."

One might tend, in this regard, to question the psychiatrist; surely a lawyer would. Stop, nevertheless, to consider some excerpts from Miss Holt's manuscript:

"O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee! O God from whom no secret lieth hid, purify the thought within our hearts! O lay and jam—and I know it was caused by a passed by 'E'—ther—i and '3E'—this time—but before—the 'e'—for praise—wasn't it—and thought I could slip by it—but it caught up with me—and created a jam—right ther—and it's 10:29 P.M.—G.R.S.—and get the *DAILY NEWS* because saw there—not in that—and *World Telegram*—

"Diagnosis: Schizophrenia, paranoid type. A slow, gradual, insidious, progressive condition. This condition is permanent."

Miss Genevieve Holt was retired, and her sister committed her to an institution. If she had been checked, then treated, when the physical disorder appeared, Miss Holt might have been saved from mental collapse.

Patterns, especially external, are easily followed. When Goethe first became a popular figure, many young men tried to adopt his fashions, until he himself in scorn remarked that it is easy to copy the cough of genius. A popular high-school athletic coach, one Spring, wore a pair of moccasins to school; it was not long before moccasins were the favorite boys' footwear at

that school. Pony-tail and other styles of hairdo may be copied by the teenagers from the motion picture starlet of the day. The influence of a teacher may be more subtle, but deeper and more lasting—for good or for ill.

Those who may be inclined to question the degree to which appearances impress children might ponder some of the pen pictures drawn of the teachers as students see them.

"One can tell even from his appearance," writes a high-school boy, "that Mr. J is not a normal person. He is of medium height and has a potbelly. His shiny, bald head is fringed with mud-colored hair. He has a jaundiced skin. His eyes are very penetrating, a quality which is especially noticeable when he is mad. He can squint his beady eyes and stare through you until you are certain that he can see the tricuspid valve operate in your quickly palpitating heart. Mr. J's most repulsive physical feature is his few remaining teeth. They are jagged, tarnished, decayed, and coated with a film of food residue. This last factor may be the cause of his habitual halitosis.

"His dress parallels his looks. Mr. J is noted for having only one pair of trousers (grey tweed) and two corduroy sport coats (grey and green). The brightness of his red socks and green canvas shoes is offset by his soiled, multicolored neckties."

Here is a girl's equally precise impression of her teacher: "If you were in her classroom when she was writing on the board, you would undoubtedly have heard the jingle-jangle of her numerous bracelets. She had more armor on than the knights of old. After hearing this jingle-jangle constantly for an hour, you would adore the silence of the students shouting in the halls between classes!

"Instead of having a natural-looking face, hers was almost a mask, for it was a painted one. Maybe this should be none of the students' concern, but if you had to look at a mask like that every day for 1 hour, wouldn't you want a change?

"Her clothes were nothing that an ordinary teacher would

wear. She had to have something that would go with her cosmetics and her armor. Miss E wore satin blouses and taffeta skirts, which went well with her hoop earrings, weird shoes, and sashes."

Shorter selections show similarly unerring detection of odd traits.

"I don't think a teacher should put on make-up in front of her class. Miss D puts on fingernail polish every morning and afternoon. She also puts on her powder and lipstick in class. By afternoon her make-up is an inch thick."

"Her hair has been dyed so often that it is all falling out, but what she does have is black—yes, just as black as coal. Anyone should know a teacher like her should have a few grey hairs, if not from age, at least from teaching."

Perceptive pupils of this sort might well contribute to the greying process. They quickly notice, also, the gap between precept and practice: "Neatness and efficiency were the codes he made his students live by. I could never understand this because he didn't always have the cleanest clothes and sometimes his fingernails were dirty."

Most burdensome to bear, apparently, is a sameness of dress, an unchanging monotony of apparel. This complaint is indeed frequent. "Every day, five days a week, she wore the same outfit. I really got sick looking at it." "It was the firm conviction of everyone that he had to his name only one brown suit and a brown nylon shirt. He wore this suit and shirt every day. We were all greatly surprised one day when he wore a blue shirt, but we found out later that he had to leave early to go to a funeral."

The discernment of the pupils goes beyond surface traits. They are just as quick to recognize, or at least to feel, worth behind plain features, or even physical defects.

"Miss X was no beauty; yet her strength of character shone in her face and in all her actions. Her severe, plain clothing

served to highlight her personality rather than detract from it. The orderliness of her room calmed her students and prepared their minds for the orderliness of grammar."

This is a subtle understanding. A more obvious appreciation glowed in a young he-man's eyes: "He was about 6 feet tall, wore glasses, and oh, yes—a very unusual trait—he was crippled, not just a little bit, but one leg was about half a foot shorter than the other, because of an injury in World War II. The most amazing part was that this was not a handicap to him. He still taught English, played basketball with the boys, and helped in track and baseball."

Here is a fuller tribute: "It's hard to say what most impressed me about my new teacher. I suppose the first thing I noticed was her unique appearance. She was short, which is nothing really unusual, and she was plump. But it was her face that was distinguished. It lay in folds of soft wrinkles accentuated by many laugh lines; her mouth was little and always carried a slight smile; and her eyes were the biggest, brownest, and roundest eyes I have ever seen. What's more, they were very bright and ever sparkling with mischief. Her hair was soft, requiring attention, and yet it was always full of expression. She looked a little like a Pekinese ready to pounce on something new and wonderful."

One might be led to think that, if children can thus pierce the masks and armor of their teachers to find the spirit beneath, they may equally be trusted not to be fooled by excesses of slovenliness, exhibitionism, or eccentricity. Unfortunately such a response is not representative. Pope was closer to the usual reaction when he declared, of Vice, that

> —seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

The indifferent child will fall readily into the sloppier ways of a careless teacher; the idolatrous, hero-worshipping child will

find it easiest to "copy the cough of genius." Oddity and excess strike more blatantly and strongly upon susceptible spirits, and childhood is the susceptible age. The effect of the quiet neatness and unobtrusive good manners of a succession of teachers may be entirely negated by the bad example of one heedless sloven or bedizened vulgarian or frustrated posturer.

And of the frustrated—who regret the denial of their dreams of more glamorous days—there is no dearth among teachers. The schoolroom is even more of a refuge than the nunnery, for the failure. To say this is in no way to deny—on the contrary, the more respect and honor to them!—the dedication of those who teach because they love to teach, because they have felt a call to this vocation, because within them is an unexpressed, unavowed echo of the words Cicero spoke centuries ago: "What better gift can we offer the Republic than to teach our youth?" But the others are also with us, the poor in spirit who find shelter in the classroom and in one way or another make it pay for their lost dreams. Even this a perceptive pupil may discern: "Because she has done some acting in the theater," wrote one girl, "my speech teacher conducts her classes with an air of drama that includes absurdly wild movements and gestures accompanied by a radically changing volume and pitch of voice, all of which gives the definite impression that she is quite mad." The disorder here lies in the pattern of behavior.

The gaudily overdecorated and the slovenly indifferent are equally suspect. But slovenliness, while a matter of personal habit, may extend beyond the person to her environment. A teacher careless of her own appearance is likely to care less about the appearance of her classroom. Such heedlessness, leading to a disorderly or dirty room, cannot but make an impresssion upon the children who must spend hours in that classroom day after day.

Mrs. Ruth Wells, aged 46, had taught in elementary school in Pennsylvania for 25 Satisfactory years. She came to official at-

tention when she was denied a refund for absence because of excessive absence. She had been out of school over 200 days in the past 10 years.

The principal, now called upon to report, stressed other concerns than Mrs. Wells' absence: "The most disreputable looking room in the school has always been the one occupied by Mrs. Wells. An excessive amount of paper, nut shells, and other rubbish may usually be found under the seats, in the desks, and in the clothing closet. On one occasion, Mrs. Wells was chided by the assistant principal on the dirty condition of the room, and told that she would be visited again in an hour. An hour later, the room was dirtier still.

"For the most part, the room is bare; there are no posters, no charts, no displays of the children's work. When Mrs. Wells is urged to decorate the room, her decorations are so lacking in value and so poorly hung that the room looks better without them.

"The roll book of this teacher is carelessly kept, slovenly, and inaccurate. Children who are absent have been marked present. When asked why, Mrs. Wells said she could not tell one Puerto Rican child from another and therefore her mistakes were natural. These children she has not learned to recognize have been with her for 7 months.

"The discipline in the class is very poor. The children are not interested in what little teaching goes on. They therefore fight with one another, talk loudly, throw spitballs and crayons at one another, and wander about the room. Mrs. Wells continues to sit at her desk, or in the rear of the room, daydreaming. Occasionally the disorder becomes too much for her, so she resorts to corporal punishment. For the past 2 years, according to the assistant principal, there have been complaints on this score from parents. Many of the complaints have come to us from the Parents' Association, but several of the irate mothers and fathers have come directly to the office. Mrs. Wells has denied striking

children, but when confronted by these children and their parents she retorted: 'The child was bad!' When Mrs. Wessel, for example, telephoned to complain that her boy had been struck, Mrs. Wells denied that she had hit any of the children; but when the class was asked how many had been slapped by the teacher, over two dozen hands were raised. Another mother brought to the office her son, who had come home with a bloody nose from a blow by this teacher. Mrs. Wells' monitor came up to the desk to ask for permission to leave the room. For no apparent reason, Mrs. Wells yanked the girl by the hair, causing her to fall across the desk, with resultant injury to her legs. Confronted with these facts, Mrs. Wells took the position that the girl's being a monitor precluded her complaining . . .

"Mrs. Johnson came to the office to lodge a different sort of complaint, regarding her daughter Mildred. The child was allowed to do her homework in school. It was marked 'A—Excellent!'—and it was incorrect. When the notebook was shown to Mrs. Wells, she exclaimed: 'I'm too busy to examine all the work carefully. Anyway, she's always making complaints.'

"Mrs. Wells' reputation among parents of the community is very poor indeed. Our biggest headache at promotion time is pacifying parents who object to their children being placed in her class. As one mother put it: 'I want my girl to learn something, not to fiddle-faddle in Mrs. Wells' room!.' Many a good class has been spoiled and suffered irreparable damage as a result of having been under Mrs. Wells for a full term."

Yet this principal had always rated Mrs. Wells Satisfactory!

At her psychiatric examination, Mrs. Wells showed evidence of great disorder. Asked whether she were Miss or Mrs. Wells, she said: "I think it's Mrs." Why was she absent so often? "I think I was out because of sickness, but it wasn't too much." Was she ever depressed? "I don't get depressed. Do I look like a Madonna?" Asked why she had skipped a child who was doing poor work, she responded: "She was too old for the class."

When asked about the dirty condition of her room, she began to give a list of other teachers in the school whose rooms, she said, were dirtier. When asked about striking the children, she named other teachers who, she said, always kept discipline through corporal punishment.

The report continued: "She never admits anything; these tactics, she claims, she learned from her father, a criminal lawyer, who advised her never to admit anything. To the assistant superintendent, she denied that the principal had ever helped her, or sent her to observe lessons. When confronted with reports on such lessons in her own handwriting, she gave her usual last ditch excuse: 'I forgot.' She associates everything with a personal issue; for instance, when the assistant principal gave his report of his observations of her work, she told him that she had been contemplating inviting him to her home, but now of course she would not do so.

"*Diagnosis:* Senile deterioration."

Mrs. Ruth Wells was retired.

Children can hardly be entrusted to those on the border of second childhood.

There seems to be some connection between slovenliness and hoarding. Hoarding should be distinguished from collecting. Hoarding is indiscriminate accumulation; collecting is discriminate and organized saving. Collecting is quite common, should be encouraged, and may often be done with conspicuous neatness and order. Almost every boy has at one time or another collected stamps. In an earlier day, it was marbles. Usually, such collections have a purpose, a unity of design, and a system of arrangement that spur proper impulses and habits of organization.

Even haphazard and indiscriminate hoarding may have had a value in pioneer and early farming days, when the scrap of twine, the nail that could be hammered straight again, the good

back leg of the broken chair, might serve in a household emergency. Many a pair of pants, even in present memories of a country childhood, showed the usefulness of saved scraps, and the crazy quilts of our grandmothers are colorful reminders of leftover odds and ends that brightened the home.

There must, however, be a place and a point at which indiscriminate hoarding should be seen as a warning of deeper aberrations. The trunkful of pancakes that we laugh at in the familiar story has a more serious counterpart in life. So Miss Alma Jayne's principal felt, when he requested that she be examined. Perhaps, indeed, he had waited too long.

Miss Alma Jayne, aged 59, had had 38 years of Satisfactory teaching in the same elementary school in Oregon. The principal's report specified:

"1. Miss Jayne is a confirmed hoarder, accumulating materials and personal articles. Besides crowding her room, she has stored materials in various parts of the building without authorization. After persistent efforts to have her clear her room, 58 cartons have been removed to date, with little effect upon the appearance of the room, which is still cluttered and untidy.

"2. Miss Jayne has an exaggerated interest in the building, and as a result the performance of custodial duties holds her attention more than her duties as a teacher. Consequently her plans and reports are late and inadequate, and have to be continuously sent for.

"It was discovered that she had a key to the building . . . When asked to return it, she created a scene, and pleaded for permission to enter the building after school, on week ends, and during holidays."

(Miss Jayne protested that she had had the school key for over 30 years, which makes the authorities' awareness seem a somewhat tardy "discovery.")

"3. Miss Jayne's personal appearance is unsatisfactory.

"4. She is evasive and secretive. She avoids check-ups by say-

ing she has lost keys. For years she would not give her home address, substituting a postal box number.

"5. When she wishes to gain a point she becomes hysterical, because she knows that, as a result of the hysteria, the issue will be postponed."

On examination, Miss Jayne's record showed significant items. Nine years before, the medical doctor had said he thought she was paranoic, but the psychiatrist found "no evidence of mental symptoms and no psychotic manifestations." Three years later, after a month's absence caused by a "nervous upset," again no abnormal mental condition was noted.

Now, after the principal's request, the psychiatrist was more thoroughgoing. Among his findings, he noted:

"Before she started to teach, Miss Jayne had dates, and danced; but she said, 'Marriage didn't seem of much interest to me.' In her first years of teaching she would occasionally go to movies or to dinner with female colleagues, but for a long time now she has had no special friends . . . She goes to movies once in a while, likes sewing, and is very fond of reading the *National Geographic Magazine*. She used to subscribe to it, but when the cost was increased she decided to get along by buying the back numbers at a second-hand bookstore. She used to like to take short trips and visit local places of interest, but several years ago she gave up traveling during her vacation, because when she returned to work she was dissatisfied.

"For some years, she collected stamps. She bought a 'simple album' and put in stamps from mail that came her way. She did not buy a catalogue nor subscribe to a stamp collector's magazine. She never purchased stamps. She occasionally sent duplicates to persons abroad, whose names she found in a church magazine, but never requested or received foreign stamps in exchange. She told me she gave up her collection because 'it's a pretty hard thing to do,' and parceled out her stamps to a number of youngsters."

The psychiatrist's report concluded: "She seems to have no insight into what might be regarded as her unusual, if not peculiar, habits—her thriftiness with respect to the *National Geographic Magazine,* her tendency to accumulate things, her avoidance of traveling. The life history she describes is that of a shut-in personality, with a certain amount of inability to adjust properly as she has become older . . . The behavior abnormalities listed in the letter of Principal Grayne are consistent with pre-senile mental changes and imply that she is not capable of efficient performance of the duties required of her . . . I have no evidence to regard her as in need of institutional care. I think that, on psychiatric grounds, this woman should be allowed to retire."

The Retirement Committee pondered Miss Alma Jayne's story. She told them she was thinking of retiring, but did not wish them to make up her mind. Several members expressed the opinion that her behavior was peculiar but did not warrant retirement. They recommended that she be transferred.

Miss Jayne was sent to a school in an excellent neighborhood. And in 3 months her new principal wrote: "I must request you to help my school by taking Miss Jayne out, and the sooner the better.

"She has brought to the school cartons and boxes full of what she calls visual aids and has placed them in her closets, wardrobe, desk, window sill and in corners of the room. I examined them and found them to contain old shoes, family albums, old *National Geographic Magazines,* old *Harper's Magazines,* discarded textbooks, newspapers, posters, old-fashioned pictures (of seals, walruses, elephants, giraffes), railroad timetables, broken vases, kerosene lamps. One box contained coal. One large carton contained several hundred copies of old *Police Gazettes.* Miss Jayne informed me that all of these things are precious belongings.

"The custodian complains that her floors are covered with chalk and that the contents of some of her boxes have been

strewn all over the room. He is obliged to spend a greatly disproportionate amount of time cleaning her room. The children threw the box containing the coal into the school yard.

"Miss Jayne's appearance is ludicrous, and she has become the object of ridicule by pupils, teachers, and parents. She wears a hat that a female comedian might put on to provoke laughter. She wears button shoes, which have been completely out of style since early in the century. She is a sight."

The Superintendent had a friendly chat with Miss Jayne. She talked things over with her niece, and decided to retire and live with her niece.

"Have you any savings?" asked the Superintendent.

"Oh, yes, but that money is for my niece."

"Is the money invested?"

"No. I have no faith in stocks and bonds, and you can't trust the savings banks. I have $78,242 hidden away in a safe place."

(This is at least one aspect of Miss Jayne's hoarding that proved purposeful and effective!)

At the end of the term, Miss Alma Jayne retired.

Persons who manifest gross physical disorderliness may have the understanding sympathy of adults. To children they are ludicrous, and legitimate game. Unable to control a class, they arouse it to ridicule and to thoughtless cruelty, promote lack of respect for one's elders and for authority, and engender a powder-train of antisocial attitudes.

15

Disorderly Thinking and Bemusement

PHYSICAL DISORDER thrusts itself upon the senses. Mental disorder moves in more subtle paths. It works away internally, mining within, often persisting and increasing for long periods—years—before its manifestations become major and call for official action. It is especially hard to segregate for early attention, because in some degree everyone falls short of perfection in this regard. So much is this true that no point of normality can be indicated, but rather a range of "normal" deviation from the rarely attained ideal.

There are, furthermore, various aspects of personality that present delicate if not insoluble problems of this sort. In the range of mental order, one of the first characteristics of a person to be noticed is his poise, or lack of it. Poise, defined by one dictionary as "balance . . . dignified bearing," by another as "balance . . . ease and dignity of manner," is perhaps more accurately described, psychologically, as the ease that comes from readiness to respond to whatever a situation may present, from an alert awareness and self-confidence. Lack of poise may be marked by hesitation followed by a sudden spurt, jerkiness, spasmodic or uncontrolled movements, halting if not temporary impediment of speech.

Certain situations, however, naturally and "normally" tend to break down poise and produce in its stead what we call "nervousness." A young applicant for a teaching position, taking an oral examination before a person or a group of persons on

whom her future depends, may be expected to be nervous. The examiners must discriminate, must decide whether the uneasiness is a natural nervousness induced by the strains of the occasion, or a deeper and more permanent pattern that may adversely affect the applicant's classroom activity. For surely a teacher, who has to guide children toward effective living, should herself be self-controlled and poised within the classroom situation.

What, before the examining Board, seems a well-composed and equable personality may, on the other hand, actually be one lacking in color and emotion. The "cold fish" sort of individual may seem to have poise, whereas a vivacious person, responding quickly and in vibrant interest along many facets of life, may seem too unrestrained, lacking in sober balance. The second may nonetheless be the more desirable teacher. Such subtleties indicate how fraught the whole field is with opportunities for misunderstanding.

Momentary lapses from poise, betrayals of nervous strain, may beset any person. A man now long a successful and well-liked teacher recalls such a moment in his career. He was in his third year as a high-school teacher of English in a seaboard city. His permanent license was in the offing. Toward the end of one period, the superintendent came into his room, to observe the lesson—and lo! the superintendent was a man who had taught him in his last year of elementary school, an autocrat of rude tone and sharp manner, whom none of the pupils had liked. Maintaining (he hoped) an outward calm, the teacher could not control an inner flurry. And on the blackboard, correcting a student's composition, he changed the spelling "villain" and made it "villian." A strong recommendation from his principal secured him his permanent license, and he never forgot how poise can fly out of the window when a "villian" comes in at the door.

Poise is an attitude; thinking is an act. Disordered thinking is therefore more likely to keep a lasting hold on our attention.

We notice lack of poise, and unless it is excessive we move on to more important concerns; but when we notice disordered thought, it is in itself important. Here again, distinction must be made between the person whose thinking is always a little disorderly, the muddlehead, the rattlepate, the scatterbrain, who nevertheless functions within the tolerable range of social living, and the person who must be watched, lest she have crossed the border into the no man's land of unresponsive thinking. In such a person there is likely to be an excess of any one, or a conjunction of several, of the following patterns. There may be a sequence of scattered, incoherent, and confused ideas, often tumbling in a torrent hard to check, running on with little logical relationship. Or there may be odd digressions, rising from inability to follow a train of thought, to keep the mind fixed upon a logical progression. This may grow to inability even to follow a conversation, or to forgetting a question in the very process of trying to answer it. There may be sluggishness or delay in comprehension, so that an idea must be repeated or explained in elementary terms, or there may be a complete failure to grasp what is involved in a simple process. There may be a badly impaired memory, for memory, like hearing, tends to weaken with age.

Indeed, all the processes of weakening thought may come gradually, so that it is virtually impossible to fix in advance a point beyond which a teacher should not be permitted to lapse. The mandatory retirement age has been set for this purpose, but it is perforce an arbitrary figure; many persons are still active and acute when they have passed it. Unfortunately, some have grown incompetent before.

In university teaching, where perhaps the lines can be drawn less rigidly, some institutions allow professors to remain on the faculty beyond the age of mandatory retirement, on special contracts that must be renewed every year. The Indianapolis Public School System has recently (December, 1955) adopted an en-

lightened variation of this regulation. It permits teachers to remain in service for 3 years beyond the normal retirement age, provided that, each of these 3 years, they take and pass both physical and mental examinations, and are "recommended for such continued employment by a committee on professional proficiency." This is an excellent start, an intelligent handling of one phase of the general problem. It is also a constructive approach to two urgent community problems: the teacher shortage, and the longer life-expectancy.

The most frequent and least harmful sort of disordered thinking is probably that of the wandering mind. This may even at times be an advantage, as with the two teachers caught here in pupil praise: "I especially liked my American literature teacher. When we studied Thoreau, she told us about her trip to Walden Pond; when we studied Mark Twain, she told us of her visit to Hannibal. She has even been to the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, and she has seen the graves of Hawthorne and Emerson." "Mrs. L has traveled and studied in England. She can tell about Stratford and Canterbury, and the Lake Country, first hand . . . She knows her subject so well and can add so many personal sidelights that the whole class seems to be visiting the place she is describing."

Less relevantly, other teachers turn from the subject in hand to personal concerns. Petty grievances and home complications run on in the teacher's mind; some outlet for her feelings may provide relief, and the class is a handy and captive audience. Students have noticed this, also. "I believe his favorite subject is his wife and two daughters. Of course, being the only man, he never gets to say anything at home. As he puts it, 'With three females around, a poor fellow hasn't got a chance.' "

"She would stand before the class 5 days a week and talk about herself. Boy, I never got so sick of anything in my life!"

"She always tells us of the time she had with her boy friend the night before."

"She told of her personal experiences in teaching and her personal life. She gave us all the details of what happened when her dog got hit by a car. Another time she told us of her visit to an insane asylum on Christmas day. She said she believed it was her most enjoyable Christmas . . . The first three weeks of high school I learned more grammar than she taught me in the almost two years I had her in junior high."

The mind that plays among digressions, that abandons the class subject for personal whims or concerns, may do more damage than just by failing to teach, or inducing habits of similar disorder. It may show pupils the profits of playing up to a person's weaknesses. Such a consequence is implied in the pupil's comment on a man who "could never stick to a subject. He would be in the middle of a discussion on Rome which would remind him of Cairo, Illinois, and his boyhood. He was also the coach of our school, and half the period would be spent in a discussion of rules of baseball, basketball, and track, plus what we did wrong in yesterday's game. Since I play baseball tolerably well, I made an A in English all year."

Still more emotional consequences may rise from the classroom unburdening of personal problems, as with a man who "is one of the worst teachers I've ever had. He stands in front of the class and tells us all about his troubles. He would come to school in the morning and tell us he was having trouble at home. Then for the rest of the day he would yell and get angry at everything."

Such aspects of misdirected expression or of disorderly thinking, while they mark weaknesses in teaching, still fall within the limits of practical tolerance. They occur in all of us, except that in adult contacts they must usually be more measured and restrained. The temptation of a young, docile audience, which cannot get away, is harder to withstand.

This book, however, is concerned with a more insidiously progressive type of disordered thinking. Because its signs are diffuse, because in some measure they are present in us all,

and because they may long seem minor deficiencies rather than major defects, the development of disordered ways of thinking may take either of two paths in the classroom.

They may continue to seem minor though gradually, almost imperceptibly, increasing nuisances, but tolerated or glossed over or soothed with the helping hand of colleague and supervisor—until the mental deterioration "suddenly" is manifest and abysmal. Instances of this development will be considered in the next chapter.

Or they may lead to other more directly noticed and more immediately objectionable classroom manifestations. For if a teacher's thoughts are blurred, her mind wandering, her ideas hard to collect, if her eyes cannot maintain attention long enough to span the class, her control of the children is bound to slip. And with the lapse of discipline, in the panic of the disordered mind, other forms of control are likely to be attempted. Most obvious of these is corporal punishment, which—except for the comparatively rare sadist—is less an end in itself than a desperate means. Its adoption, therefore, is a sign that something else is wrong.

Mrs. Hedda Nau, aged 42, had taught in elementary school in Delaware for 17 Satisfactory years. (Remember that the official rating Satisfactory time and again does not correspond to the fact.) Mrs. Nau's principal must have had the patience of Job, but even that was finally exhausted. An irate parent came to the principal with her boy, who said that Mrs. Nau had lifted him up in her arms, then thrown him onto the floor; his spine still hurt him. Asked about this, Mrs. Nau said the boy had "got her crazy."

The principal's report indicated long forbearance at the expense of the children Mrs. Nau taught. Now, after 7 years, he poured out a long list of grievances. His report began: "From the first day she came to the school, I realized that Mrs. Nau was peculiar, to say the least. She had poor control of the class,

dressed oddly, and responded to my questions in an evasive manner. I gave her a great deal of help in class management and teaching techniques, but she resented my suggestions and seemed inclined to do things her own odd way. For instance, when I suggested that she put up curtains to lessen the glare, she put one pink and one blue curtain on each window. She had a mixed class of boys and girls. I often had to tell her to keep her desk blotter clean, and to keep her plan book and her roll book up-to-date and in order; she would grumble excuses under her breath, or begin talking to the class while I was instructing her. She had an old phonics chart that was in tatters, but she insisted on drilling from this instead of using newer available methods for teaching reading readiness.

"In her third year, with her permanent license pending, I worked hard with her so that she might do well when the superintendent came to observe her. She had improved somewhat, but he felt that she was a doubtful case at best, and he warned me that with all my help she might become more and more disturbed as time went on. I thought I could still improve her, and pleaded with him to give her another chance as she had a great deal of home trouble. Her mother was blind and had fallen and broken her hip, and the girl seemed distracted. He consented; then, as time went on and I received adverse comments from parents, I was ashamed to ask for release from her.

"During the absence of the district superintendent, his temporary replacement recognized Mrs. Nau and said that for 10 years of substitute service, various schools in his district had suffered with her. She continued taking courses, achieved her M.A. equivalent, but never seemed to improve. Nor could she be trusted with extracurricular activities, for everything she started grew into such a muddle it was twice as hard to set it straight again.

"Mothers would come to me time and again complaining of her treatment of the children, although I gave her easy grades

and the best classes I could. The mothers said that she frightened the children, that she threatened worse things if they told their parents, that she would often scream and stamp her feet in a rage if they made mistakes. This she would always deny, wheedling the mother to believe that her child was lying. She told me time and time again that she never intimidated children and that she was only trying to help them with their lessons. She insisted that she was psychologically incapable of hitting anyone, and that she never recalled pinching, pulling hair, or even touching children. With tears in her eyes, she would beg me to understand that she was only trying to help them do well.

"A year ago, her mother died. She was very much upset, and blamed all her poor work on what she had gone through during her mother's illness—although her mother lived in another city. Soon after, she began driving to school in what she said was 'the family car.' The teachers saw her meeting a man after school, driving away with him sometimes in her car, sometimes in his. When they teased her about this, she showed a ring and said she would be a June bride.

"She came back to school in September, still unmarried. This is when she seemed to get really vicious in her treatment of the children. Mothers complained, refused to have their children in her class, formed a committee and threatened to go to the School Board, started a petition asking for her dismissal. One mother threatened to wait for her outside of school and thrash her within an inch of her life if she ever touched her boy again.

"When this mother threatened her, Mrs. Nau broke down and cried in the classroom, gathered all her personal things, and told the children she was 'fired.' She came to my office and told me she 'quit.' I pointed out to her that she should not thus unthinkingly forfeit her pension rights. She sat in my office. The superintendent suggested that she apply for a transfer, and told her she had a right to resign if she wished. Somewhat recovered from her crying spell, she told him that she had never

done any of the things of which she was accused, that she liked it in this school and wished to stay.

"That was a Friday afternoon early in October. She came back on Monday, told everybody but me that she had been married, showed her ring, changed her name at the School Board (to Mrs. Nau), and continued her classroom work."

There were no further complaints until December 7, when she hurled the boy to the floor. This incident led the principal to request an examination of Mrs. Nau.

The psychiatrist stated: "Throughout the long interview it was impossible to break through the protective mechanism this teacher consciously kept about her statements and replies, and she would repeatedly declare that from childhood to the present time she has always been normal in every way and never had any nervous reactions . . . Early in the interview, she stated that all the complaints about her were lies. When I asked why so many parents had sent letters complaining about her treatment of their children, she said it was because her class was on the fourth floor and they were using criticism to get their children transferred to a lower floor. Finally, she did admit two of the complaints:

"1. She did pull one pupil's hair, though she had previously denied this and called the child a liar in front of his mother and the class. She now admits that she had been fabricating, to protect herself.

"2. She has stood in the middle of the classroom and screeched and screeched, ending with the cry: 'I can't stand it! I wish I were dead!'—with all the children listening.

"It took quite a while before Mrs. Nau was willing to agree that the admissions she had just made confirmed serious misbehavior in front of small children and might cause serious impairment in the mental development of some children . . .

"Her general reactions—indicating too much self-protection and self-interest regardless of the effect on developing young

boys and girls—indicate that this teacher is emotionally unfit to be in contact with children daily, since it is well known that *the daily contact with a teacher plays an important part in the normal or abnormal development of little minds.* Although I feel in fairness that children should no longer be exposed to her in a class, I do feel that Mrs. Nau should be given a further trial at duties in the central office, such as clerical work, where her environment will be that of adults who are already formed in their personality make-up. Thus we should gain two ends: that of preventing children from having an emotionally unstable and mentally troubled individual to identify themselves with in later life and therefore allowing more normal development in these children; and that of aiding this teacher to adjust for her own benefit in an adult environment."

(There are no provisions, in city school systems, for assigning a teacher to regular duty as a clerk. Most teacher assignments to headquarters are for specialized duty, and are deemed a reward for expert service, not a therapeutic device nor an eleemosynary sop.)

Questioned by the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Nau again denied screeching, or inflicting corporal punishment. She said that the parents had "ganged up" on her, and that she had admitted these things to the psychiatrist in order to "please the doctor." Mrs. Hedda Nau was retired. It seems clear that she had been unconsciously punishing the children for insufficiencies and dissatisfactions in her own self. This pattern of externalizing one's inner conflicts, of making those around suffer for one's own lack of fulfillment, is frequent in life, and most readily successful in the classroom.

The reluctance of principals to report a teacher for mental sluggishness or disordered trends of thought is illustrated in the story of Adelaide Gibbons. At the age of 52, Mrs. Gibbons had completed 21 years of Satisfactory service, yet she had been trans-

ferred from eight schools. Her present principal asked for an examination after a talk with the chairman of Mrs. Gibbons' department, Miss Green. Mrs. Gibbons, according to Miss Green, had protested against a routine assignment, then announced that she did not feel well, was going home, and might be out of school for several weeks.

Miss Green, the principal's report went on, "had 50 cents lying on her desk; before leaving, Mrs. Gibbons very deliberately picked up the coins and put them in her own purse. Miss Green was so flabbergasted that she did not say anything . . . I am informed that the other day Mrs. Gibbons took another teacher's fountain pen (which she later returned with apologies). I do not for a moment wish to accuse Mrs. Gibbons of stealing; it is, however, an indication of—what shall I call it?—absent-mindedness, a condition that is very apparent in her classroom. Also, the other day she took four sets of corrected compositions belonging to another teacher. When asked, she insisted that she did not have them. The following day she returned them.

"Miss Green, Superintendent Thompson, and I all find her impossible in the classroom. Her chief faults are extreme forgetfulness, resentment of pupils, inability to organize the lessons in any logical order. She seems at times to be confused and not to understand what is being said to her; she seems to be 'far away.' Probably because she resents her pupils, they resent her; they are constantly asking to be taken out of her class, where they claim they learn nothing and are sick and tired of her 'peculiarities.' She denies that she inflicts corporal punishment, but she was tried in a previous school on such charges, and was reprimanded and warned not to repeat the offense. I have had several complaints on this score but nothing of a serious nature." (*Query:* when does corporal punishment become serious? *After* a child is badly hurt?)

The psychiatrist checked Mrs. Gibbons' personal background. "She has been separated from her husband for many years and

her son, now 15, lives with her. Her husband is living with another woman in nearby Boston. She claims that she lost her husband through the machinations of a nurse who was hired to care for her son. According to Mrs. Gibbons, the nurse told Mr. Gibbons that his wife was not only a very dirty person but she was suffering from a horrible disease, an incurable disease . . . She still loves her husband but has made no effort to see him."

Coming to the present, the doctor reported: "I had great difficulty in talking to this teacher. It is an effort for her to follow a conversation and her thinking is definitely retarded. At times her answers are quite irrelevant and she seems to be troubled by her confusion. She is a sick woman and I gather from her story that she has been ill for years. It is astonishing that she has been able to carry on her work as a teacher for so many years, but in the light of her condition her work could not have been of any great benefit to her pupils, upon whom she would be inclined to vent her spleen. She is now unfit to continue as a teacher. I would tentatively diagnose her illness as schizophrenia."

The Retirement Committee also commented on her irrelevant answers and her marked state of confusion. After eight enforced transfers, though always with a Satisfactory rating, Mrs. Gibbons was retired. And once again the doctor wondered why the children had been so long subjected to such a baneful influence.

The complex of physical and mental changes that precede and accompany the menopause is an obvious contributor to the problems of a woman teacher, and must be considered with the utmost sympathy. Into every woman's life this is likely to bring added worry and additional strain. Many aspects of this condition make it natural that there should be temporary irritation, lessened ability to concentrate on daily occupations, more fatigue, less fervor and drive. Such manifestations are usually not pro-

longed; while they endure, they must be accepted—in teachers, too—as part of life's normal movement. It should perhaps be mentioned that men may go through an analogous period of increased tensions and weakened will.

Unfortunately, sometimes mental disturbances which up to this time apparently were minor or were held in check, come to the forefront and take command of the personality, during this period of lessened resistance. Such seems to have been the case—to select one instance of many—with Gloria Leary.

Mrs. Leary, at 50, had 23 years of Satisfactory teaching in elementary school in Vermont, when the assistant superintendent requested a medical examination. He had seen her "teach"—the quotation marks are his—an arithmetic and a reading lesson. "I found her teaching ineffective, the control of the class poor, and she seemed quite unaware of what was going on. She was nervous and unable to cope with ordinary classroom situations. Immediately after the lesson, I had a conference with her in the office of the principal, who was present. She seemed dazed and frequently took some time to answer my questions. She appeared to be lost in thought, only to disclose that she was unable to collect her thoughts.

"I spoke to her about the charges of corporal punishment. She did not affirm or deny these charges. She stated that if the parents said so, she felt she should agree with them on the basis that the customer is always right. I then asked her the following question: 'If I were a parent and accused you of stealing 50 cents from my child, what would you say?' Her answer was that she would not deny it.

"When I discussed her lesson, she agreed with all my criticisms, i.e., that the class paid no attention; that she seemed unaware of what the children were doing; that when Group I read, Group II and Group III did nothing and were disorderly (she replied that they were supposed to listen); that the arithmetic lesson was without point; that no teaching was done, etc. When

I asked her if she had anything to say, she stated that since I was a superintendent she thought she should listen and learn something. When she did answer my questions, she frequently made irrelevant statements, rambling along with much hesitancy and prolonged silence."

The principal's report added: "Mrs. Leary's ineffectiveness in the work of the present term is alarming. She is showing an increasing lack of ability to cope with the normal classroom situations . . . It has been necessary to warn Mrs. Leary several times about the matter of corporal punishment. One mother reported with witnesses that her child had been pinched by the teacher and grabbed by the throat. Another charged that her daughter's index finger had been bent back as a punitive measure.

"Mrs. Leary's record shows that she has always been a very weak teacher. However, prior to this year she has shown some ability to respond to suggestions. Now she seems unable to act upon direct specific instructions."

To the psychiatrist Mrs. Leary described her interview with the principal and superintendent in these terms: "I became emotionally unstable, because I talked in a detailed manner, and I did not tell them of my change of life." The psychiatrist's report continues: "When I questioned her about her work, she said: 'I am an average teacher; not so much poise as other teachers; never went about things in logical sequences; my manner is not that of a poised woman because I come from the country where we talk conversationally.' She then rambled off and said: 'Would you like to see a letter from my daughter, who is in Alfred University?' She then giggled and smiled in a childish manner, without any apparent cause, and started to ramble on. She is unquestionably in the menopause period, and an examination of eyegrounds shows that her cerebral blood vessels have sclerotic changes. This latter condition is in itself a competent producing cause for her emotional instability, for her impulsive acts, also

for her loss of inhibitions. It is now my opinion that Gloria Leary has undergone mental regression and is suffering from a mental disorder—psychosis with involutional period and cerebral arteriosclerosis."

Mrs. Gloria Leary was retired.

The complications ensuing upon sexual malaise or maladjustment do not always wait to manifest themselves at the menopause. Miss Marsha Lee, for example, was only 36, with 13 years of Satisfactory high-school teaching in California, when one day she became confused and hysterical in the classroom and was persuaded, reluctantly, to go to the teachers' room and rest.

The chairman of Miss Lee's department then wrote to the principal: "I would respectfully suggest that now is the time to report Miss Lee to headquarters." The principal, adding that Miss Lee "for several years has been an upsetting influence in our Social Science Department," passed along the chairman's report, which continued:

"We have long known that there was something wrong with Miss Lee, and the problems she created have greatly increased. Entire classes have complained about her marks. It appears that marks are assigned to pupils without reference to work accomplished or effort; the outstanding pupils frequently are given failing marks and the very poorest students are given excellent ratings. Dissatisfied students therefore quarrel with Miss Lee and call her names. She retorts in kind. But the fact is that her marks in no sense reflect the work or ability of the children and are worse than meaningless, since they create disrespect for the teacher and discourage the pupils from exerting their best efforts. Pupils also call her names, such as "Miss Flea," "Miss Pea," "Miss Bee." She either doesn't hear them or pays no attention to them. At times children are rude and vulgar. I saw the following statements on her blackboard at 9:30 A.M. and they were

still there at 2:00 in the afternoon: 'Miss Lee went out to take a pee' and 'Methinks Miss Lee Stinks.' "

Miss Lee's teaching had been interrupted by a stay at Windsor Hospital, a hospital for nervous and mental diseases; the hospital entry mentioned "neurasthenia; feelings of depression; hopelessness; some anxiety." The psychiatrist added: "I find also that she had a residence at a sanitarium in Parkville. This information she failed to reveal." She was currently visiting a private psychiatrist, Dr. Freeman, of whom she said: "He has been trying to discharge me, and make me stand on my own feet. Dr. Freeman meant a lot to me. I was infatuated with him. Psychiatric patients do depend emotionally on the doctor. He rebuffed me. I said 'I love you' and he replied 'I don't love you.' "

Discussion revealed childhood conflict with and jealousy of an elder half-sister. The school psychiatrist reported: "Her sexual instincts have never become socialized, as evidenced by her auto-eroticism, starting at an early age and continuing to the present time. It is not my intention to specify the manifestations of this condition.

"She is rather shy and retiring. She did not mix very well with teachers in school, and now associates with former patients who knew her when she was at Windsor Hospital." Miss Lee told the psychiatrist of "certain sexual maladjustments . . . I read a lot about sex; now I have ideas of development . . . I am a dreamer. I try to adjust myself by trying to love men. I had several boy friends, but each one dropped me. Why, I don't know. On one occasion one of my boy friends"—she hesitated—"I was about to marry him, but he threw me down. That was when I went to the Windsor Clinic . . . Once again, I wanted to marry another man, and again I failed. I began to wonder why they dropped me, and then I thought it was my fault—hopeless."

In the meantime her constant auto-eroticism continued. It was when her psychiatrist, Dr. Freeman, rebuffed her that she had the emotional outbreak and hysteria in the classroom, which precipi-

tated the investigation. The psychiatrist diagnosed progressive schizophrenia. Miss Marsha Lee was retired.

Disorder breeds disorder. The sooner it is checked and removed from the classroom, the less likely are the children to succumb to its pernicious influence.

16

Senile Deterioration

WHEN ONE APPROACHES the problems of disorderly or disordered thinking one must recognize that one is, as it were, walking in a mist. One may speak of "gross lack of common sense," but who determines what is "gross"? Has it not been said that common sense is most uncommon? And are not all of us guilty of many a lapse?

There is no question that, as many persons grow older, their hearing is impaired, their memory weakens, and they experience deterioration of other functions of their bodies. Within measure, these are normal expectancies and do not incapacitate the individual. And who is to set that "measure"?

The symptoms of cerebral arteriosclerosis, for instance, have been listed as: undue fatigue; decreased ability to do intellectual work; irritability; sudden change of mood; delay in comprehension; decrease in power of inhibition resulting in breach of proper conduct and in conduct foreign to the person; loss of self-control; rages and tantrums; confusion; violent excitement; headache; dizziness; fainting spells.

A more helter-skelter list it would be hard to imagine. Who does not at times suffer from delay in comprehension? What degree of fatigue is "undue"?

This chapter deals with a waning of powers that usually comes late in life, often after many years of excellent service. Since, also, it is usually a gradual decline, it may at first be little heeded. Respect for the long successful teacher and the almost imper-

ceptible advance of the condition, make those in charge perhaps no more than shake their heads, or now and again try to lend a helping hand, until, it seems all of a sudden, the senile deterioration is pronounced. Then parents' complaints seem to pour in an avalanche, so that the psychiatrist, coming in as a stranger, wonders how the unfit teacher could have been left in charge of children so long.

Thus it is that persons still in active service may be described in such terms as these:

"Mr. Strohl was an excellent committee chairman in his day. That day is long past. He is now a garrulous old man, very irritable and unable to pursue a direct line of thought."

"Miss Talbot sits at her desk all day doing nothing. She is tired, terribly tired. The clerk does all her work, and is the real principal."

"Superintendent Dunn has slowed up to such a degree that principals and teachers are talking about it. He doesn't remember a thing from one day to another."

"This is the third time Mr. Ormsby has been accused of fondling little girls. This time, if the child, who is 9 years old, is to be believed, he went very far indeed."

For such reasons, supervisors should be trained to recognize the signs early, to give the signal that may help the teacher and relieve the class.

In the majority of cases in which senile deterioration occurs, the breakdown comes after many years of devoted and successful teaching. Peter Delman, aged 51, had 29 years of Satisfactory service, when, upon his request for sabbatical leave, he was given a medical examination. He told the doctor that his fatigue "started about 2 years ago, and may have had some connection with the arrival of a new principal, to whom he had a difficult time adjusting. Mr. Delman has constantly been annoyed by the principal's intimacy. 'I can't stand it when people put their arms around me.' . . . He said that his movements were slow

most of his life, but became slower about 7 years ago." The doctor suspected early Parkinson's disease.

The principal, asked for a report, stated among other things:

"1. When he first came to the school, Mr. Delman had no difficulty keeping his classes under control. His lack of class control has grown marked during the past few years.

"2. He is most erratic in meeting his classes. Last Wednesday, it was announced there would be no assembly, yet he led his class to the auditorium. One day he came to me, quite disturbed because his fourth-period class did not appear. He had no fourth-period class assignment.

"3. He has difficulty remembering the period, or even the day. On a Monday he inquired: 'What day is tomorrow? Is it Friday?'

"4. He often seems to have difficulty understanding what he is told."

Before the Retirement Committee, Mr. Delman found it impossible to give the names of any five pupils he had ever taught. He didn't know when he was first appointed to a teaching position, nor the names of any of his principals, including the present one. His wife told the Committee that Mr. Delman had taken courses to improve his memory, but she had had to go with him to the Memory School because he forgot where the School was located.

Peter Delman was retired. The children probably—though not pleasantly—remembered him. What could he have taught them, what given them, to remember?

In Mr. Delman's case, nothing happened until he applied for sabbatical leave. In the case of Mrs. Paula Bell, nothing happened until she was refused a sabbatical. She was 50 years old, with 25 years of Satisfactory teaching. She applied for a sabbatical leave before the summer; when it was refused, she just didn't go back to school in the fall.

She was ordered to report to the school doctor. He declared:

"Mrs. Bell came in with a peculiar dancing gait. She sat in her chair grimacing, laughing, twitching, and chewing gum the whole time. She wore a housedress; her hat was cocked over one eye. She wriggled, twisted, and sat in a peculiar sidewise pose. Her whole appearance was sloppy."

Referred to the psychiatrist, Mrs. Bell "presented herself in a rather bizarre manner. In one hand she clutched two red roses. Her hat was askew, and she kept her coat hung low off her shoulders like an opera cape. Her gait was a curious combination of tripping and waddling, in a most peculiar rhythm. Her speech was highly manneristic. She cocked her head to one side, looking coyly out of the corners of her eyes, and emphasizing her remarks by waving the roses . . . I believe Mrs. Bell is a mentally deteriorated person, hardly in condition to care for herself, much less to take charge of children. It is apparent that Mrs. Bell is not in a condition to carry on her duties as a teacher in the public schools at this time, nor has she been in a condition to teach for a long time. The deterioration did not develop suddenly."

The deterioration was manifest in her answers to the Retirement Committee:

"If 3 oranges cost 12 cents, 18 oranges would cost 9 dollars."

"At night the suns turns into the moon."

"The population of the United States is 400,000,000; the population of Germany is only 2,000 because Russia now occupies most of it; the population of Russia is billions."

"Columbus brought the Pilgrims to Salem where they practiced witchcraft."

"The Constitution of the United States was written by Abraham Lincoln, who was called Honest Abe because he never told a lie."

Mrs. Paula Bell was retired.

Miss Ethel Cobb, aged 56, Satisfactory until her last two terms, was similarly suffering from senile deterioration. A teacher of

health education, she came to school in winter wearing "a formless summer dress; her stockings hung in wrinkles upon her thin legs; her shoes were dirty and shapeless." The records, as well as her appearance, showed her incapable of teaching or even controlling her classes. Yet her family hired lawyers, who employed legal technicalities and delaying tactics, and succeeded in keeping Miss Ethel Cobb on the city payroll another term and a half before she was retired.

Any of the symptoms of mental deterioration may assume a major role in the actual breakdown. In the cases cited above, one was predominantly loss of memory, one was decreased ability to do intellectual work, and one was excessive breach of proper conduct. In other cases, lack of self-control may serve to release prejudices or emotional drives that thitherto the teacher kept in check and unobserved. With the weakening of the mental powers, the prejudice is revealed in all its strength.

Eloise Brandau, aged 44, had taught for 22 Satisfactory years in Illinois when her principal reported: "She has become childish and slow in thought. She has no initiative whatsoever and must be told what to do at all times. While she is receptive to suggestion and respectful, she is generally unable to adopt even the simplest suggestions. The children sense her lack of resourcefulness and take advantage of it. She has utterly lost control of her class."

Before the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Brandau made such statements as:

"The distance between England and Germany is 100,000 miles, maybe more, maybe less. What difference does it make?"

"Shakespeare lived in the tenth century. He was a contemporary of George Bernard Shaw."

"I don't read books because it's bad for the retina." She did not know what the retina is.

Asked another simple question in history, Mrs. Brandau ex-

claimed: "Don't ask me such silly questions; I am not a Quiz Kid. I don't teach those things so what difference does it make if I know the answers or not?"

Suddenly, the report continues, Mrs. Brandau "stood up, transformed, and burst into a fiery tirade: 'Is this Committee a Jew Committee?' (The Retirement Committee consisted of two Catholics, two Protestants, and one Jew.) 'If it is, I am through. My principal is a Jew. You Jews are out to get us. Wait till Hitler comes here. He'll throw all of you and your Jew President Rosenfeld into the lake, where you belong!'"

Mrs. Eloise Brandau was retired.

The prejudices of Mrs. Gilda Barone exploded in the classroom. At the age of 51, with 28 years of Satisfactory service, she came to the attention of the school authorities when she requested a transfer. She explained:

"My principal has advised me to ask for a transfer.

"I was accused of beating a Puerto Rican boy in my class. I did not attack this child. I called him 'a dirty Puerto Rican'—which he is, and told him to return where he came from. He had thrown torn papers all over the floor under his desk.

"An article in regard to my case was written in an election leaflet of some kind. I heard about the paper but did not see it. I believe it was written by the Labor Party. Due to the fact that many of the parents in this school are Puerto Rican and belong to the Labor Party, I do not feel that I will be able to teach under normal conditions if I remain here.

"I have had a fire in my classroom.

"At lunch time balls are thrown through my classroom window. My windows are frequently broken.

"My keys were stolen from my school mailbox.

"My electric lights were tampered with.

"I do not feel it is safe to remain in my room after school hours."

It was the Labor Party that (enclosing petitions signed by parents asking that a hearing be granted in the matter) sent the School Board this letter:

"On October 11, Mrs. Gilda Barone brutally assaulted a young 8-year-old student in her second-year class. He has been in this country only 8 months, having come here with his parents from Puerto Rico. The teacher was apparently telling a story to the class and this young boy, because he is not able to understand English well, allowed his attention to wander. The very next thing he became aware of was that he was grabbed by the hair and throat by his teacher who, shaking him, threw him to the floor, then proceeded to assault him on the left side of the face with a book. This young boy, José Valez, suffered bruises, swelling, and black and blue marks on his face, knees, and chest and other parts of his body as a result of this attack. It is also reported that the teacher said: 'You dirty little Puerto Rican, why didn't you stay where you came from?'

"Mrs. Valez, the mother of José, and other members of the community brought this shocking matter to the attention of the principal of the school. He responded by letter dated October 19, which follows in part: 'It is unfortunate that a member of the staff got into difficulties with a child in her class. Although she flatly denies what is being said against her, it still is fairly clear that something of this nature must have happened. This teacher is now seeking a transfer, which we hope will be consummated soon, to the end that she may find a place in a more homogeneous community where some of the serious problems that confront us may not arise.'

"We, as mothers and fathers of the community, find it impossible to understand how the matter can be treated so lightly by the principal, for it is immediately apparent that a recommendation of a transfer to a school that might make life easier for Mrs. Barone is hardly an adequate remedy for the serious

wrong she has committed. As a matter of fact, the remedy suggested is more in the nature of a reward than a punishment.

"This is not the first time that a member of the Puerto Rican national group has been the victim of brutality at the hands of teachers in the school system. Such attacks upon members of a minority group must not only be very severely condemned by an educational institution but, more than that, it is the burden and responsibility of the school system to instill and foster not discord but racial, religious, and national harmony.

"It is therefore imperative that the proper school authorities act promptly to prefer charges against Mrs. Barone for her actions, not only for the purpose of punishing this teacher but to serve notice to all teachers that this kind of brutality and prejudice will not be tolerated by the school system, but on the contrary will be vigorously and affirmatively fought."

Subsequently, Superintendent Gray interviewed Mrs. Barone. He sought to put her at ease by not referring at first to the Puerto Rican incident. His report begins:

"Mrs. Barone spoke incoherently about progressive methods, lecture methods, grouping, blocks of work. Her ideas were hopelessly jumbled.

"She stated that her class had 'studied Chile carefully.' However, she did not have any knowledge of Chile except that it is a progressive country. In answer to my question 'What is the capital of Chile?' she replied: 'I don't know. I am a nervous wreck.'

"She stated: 'I am now taking up How to Save Water.' In reply to questions, she said: 'Water is in aqueducts'—but she did not know what an aqueduct is. 'Water goes up when it is hot, and then it falls down into the streets and then it comes up from the ground all the way to the sixth floor.' Asked how it reaches the sixth floor, she said: 'Water seeks its own level.' Asked to explain this, she declared she was being asked too

many difficult questions that were not in the course of study; she follows the book. She repeated that she was a nervous wreck. 'I use the textbook. I obey orders,' she insisted.

"Mrs. Barone is at present unfit to teach, and I am at a loss to understand how this teacher could have continued to function in a school for so many years without anyone's reporting her . . . I do not plan to have her examined physically or by a psychiatrist. An interview with this teacher can lead to but one conclusion, namely, that she is a woman whose mental state is such that she is clearly unfit to teach."

Mrs. Barone was nevertheless given medical and psychiatric examinations before she was referred to the Retirement Committee. Here is a brief portion of the Committee interview:

"*Question:* Are Puerto Ricans American citizens?

"*Answer:* Of course not.

"*Q:* Where do Puerto Ricans come from?

"*A:* I don't know. I think Africa. It's an island.

"*Q:* Is Africa an island?

"*A:* I don't teach Africa; it's not in my grade.

"*Q:* Do you like to teach Puerto Ricans?

"*A:* No, I do not. They stole my keys. They broke my windows. They are always in disorder. They pay no attention; they throw paper and things on the floor, and they constantly jabber, mostly in Spanish. I don't feel safe with them. Lots of them are nice but the majority are not. It is perfectly awful to have to teach them day in, day out, week in, week out. Nobody can."

Mrs. Gilda Barone was retired. But not before her Puerto Ricans were given an authoritarian—which they doubtless took for an authoritative—introduction to American democracy.

In spite of one's natural dislike of prejudice, and one's sympathy for the underdog, it may be well to pause for a moment's consideration of the burden thrust upon those that have to handle 30-odd young children in a classroom.

Ask any parent about the behavior of her children. How many —except for show purposes—will tell you they are little angels? Even such "angels," inquiry will elicit, have their moments of fall. And Mother applies various sorts of disciplinary device. She may assume a firm cold demeanor for an hour or two instead of the usual tenderness, to win back to good conduct a child who feels the need of loving security and support. She may bid the offender sit still and silent on a chair, until he has "come to his senses" and is ready to promise to behave. She may send the naughty child to his room. She may deprive him of between-meal sweets, or the dessert, or an expected trip or other treat. She may forbid his watching the TV. She may, if angered enough, give him a slap or two, or tell Daddy when he comes home from work that Brother has been a bad boy, and let the emotional or the physical pressure of the father's disapproval join with her own in bringing the child to conform for a while to the domestic requirements of peace and good behavior.

None of these devices can be employed in the instant emergencies of the classroom.

And this description has touched only the usually well-behaved youngster, reasonably well brought up. How about the child upon whom his parents dote? Whose every whim is granted, so that he is thoroughly spoiled? The child who has learned how a tantrum at once checks contrary adult behavior and produces all his dear little heart desires?

At the other extreme, so frequent in some neighborhoods as to be almost a general pattern, is the child treated not with kindness but with brutality. Not necessarily the unloved child—he presents special problems—but the child, often the several children in an increasing family, whom the parents know no other way of controlling than by a swift cuff or an application of the strap.

Take a mixed class of 6-, 7-, or 8-year-olds with these various disciplinary backgrounds, put them together in a new experi-

ence, where they have to make their own way in a strange environment filled with unknown and possibly hostile faces—and how is a teacher to mold this swarming throng of fears and alarming expectations into a co-operative, friendly, harmoniously progressing spirit? To achieve an atmosphere of happy and interested, concerted work, from such a heterogeneous start, is little short of a miracle. Too little understanding and credit have been given to the devoted teachers of the early classes in our schools.

On the contrary, any slip of impatience, any desperate resort to a slap to check, not just one disorderly child, but the class eruption that might ensue if the first disturbance or disobedience gets by, may be seized upon by indignant parents, brought up in the PTA, and magnified into an assault upon innocent and helpless childhood. And if the child in question is a member of "a minority group," the instant cry of prejudice is raised.

It is not the intention of this book to declare that prejudice does not exist in the schools; cases are given here to show that prejudice can flare in teachers as well as in other mortals. But before parents utter that cry, it would be of tremendous benefit to the schools and the community were those parents to ask themselves what sort of child they have sent to the school, what they have done toward creating a well-bred child, with the seeds of self-discipline planted, so that the teacher has at least a preliminary spirit of love and co-operation and interested expectancy with which to work.

It is unfortunate that an increasingly large number of children seem to reach the schools already imprinted with a home pattern that makes the teacher's problem doubly difficult. The parents' obligation, of ethical and moral guidance and even of indicating proper everyday behavior, is thrown upon the already overburdened teacher. The problems of the home are transferred to the school, but the school may not avail itself of the home methods of solving them. It is to the eternal credit of our teachers

that so many find a way through, to adequate control and sound guidance of the growing child.

The basic responsibility for a child's moral attitude and for his behavior rests on the home. With these reflections in mind, and a proper esteem for the devoted men and women—the great majority of the country's teachers—who are whole-heartedly cultivating a stony field, this book turns again to the problem of the comparatively few who are marred by prejudice or bias.

A bias of another sort came to light with the mental enfeeblement of Miss Maude Withers, who at the age of 61 had completed 40 Satisfactory years as an elementary school teacher in the Middle West. The principal then felt that he had to report her, summarizing many letters of complaint from parents of her pupils:

"*Mr. Robert Kane:* Miss Withers resents the new technique of teaching; she insists on rigid posture and clasped hands; she shouts 'Shut up!' and has accused her second-year pupils of being liars and making a liar of her; she threatens pupils with a crack on the behind if not obeyed and generally keeps the class in a state of terror. She yelled at the child she had sent as a messenger, when the child returned to deliver the answer. Miss Withers did not realize that she had sent the child on an errand. Our child becomes nauseous at the thought of going to school, whereas he formerly loved school. Nothing new is being taught; all the old work taught by Mrs. Reid is being constantly repeated. Our child was so bewildered by Miss Withers' contradictory orders and so emotionally disturbed by her scolding, that he could not eat his lunch.

"*Mrs. H. Pinkerton:* Debby has come home several times in tears, due to the inefficiency of Miss Withers. Debby paid a dollar for a picture which the teacher denies receiving; this happened to two other pupils. No progress is noticed in the child's work, although progress was notable with Mrs. Reid."

The other parents had similar complaints, summed up in a

letter from the President of the PTA: "Several of the parents have complained to me about Miss Withers' use of corporal punishment; the mothers are disturbed and have asked for action. The children are still being taught by old-fashioned methods. The children are terribly confused. The teacher herself is so confused that her directions and instructions change from day to day. The Clean Club for encouraging personal cleanliness has been done away with. The Parent-Teachers Association urges that this situation not continue, for the sake of the children."

When Miss Withers left for her interview with the superintendent and Mrs. Reid appeared to take her place, the children greeted Mrs. Reid with handclapping and shouts of joy. After lunch, Vincent Joyce brought a note from his mother: "Vince came home this noon very excited and happy. He thinks it wonderful you are back with the class. The unpleasant experiences he and the rest of the class have been having should make him happy once more to have the opportunity of doing something constructive."

To the psychiatrist, Miss Withers found it hard to tell where she had been born; she finally fixed the date at 1880, which made her mandatory retirement long overdue. She could not give the approximate dates of the American Revolution or the Civil War, but thought—she added she wasn't sure—that the War of 1812 had been fought in 1812. Asked to count down from 100 subtracting 7, she attained: 100–96–87–78–69–81–88, then protested: "I think this is enough. I certainly know how to teach subtraction. Silly to ask me to subtract. I have been teaching it for 40 years."

Her answers to simple questions in history and geography were equally faulty. Asked whether she thought it right to inflict corporal punishment, Miss Withers replied: "A slap with the palm of the hand or a ruler wakes up the brain; too bad it isn't

allowed. But it's done all the time and don't let anybody tell you it isn't."

When the subject of teaching methods was mentioned, Miss Withers' prejudice flared:

"All these new-fangled ideas and the Activity Program were brought in by my principal and his friends, the Communists. They are bent on teaching atheism and Communism to the children. I am not a Communist and I believe in God. It's not right to let the Communists control our schools. From what I hear it's happening all over the USA. Pretty soon the USA will be the USSA. I'm in the way of the Communists and there are may others like me. You get us out first and put in Teachers' Union members. Pretty soon the schools will have only Communist teachers. Pretty soon Khrushchev will be the Superintendent of Schools. Then you will have all the Activity Program you want."

Miss Maude Withers was retired. It is a question how good her children were at subtraction. They probably excelled in reeling and writhing, with emphasis on uglification and derision. The classroom should be a Wonderland; indeed, it should stimulate both wonder and the quest for answers to wonder. It should not be allowed to degenerate into a Blunderland.

The story of Miss Madeleine Auer, in itself a typical instance of senile deterioration, takes added interest from other elements in its unfolding. It came to light in an unusual fashion; it continued long after the teacher's retirement, and it was instrumental in focussing attention upon an even greater evil in her city's schools.

The Superintendent of a midwestern city, walking to his office one morning, met a friend. After the greetings, his friend Henry said: "Bill, I've been intending to call you. I was deeply concerned over something I heard the other day."

Such a beginning usually heralds an appeal in some teacher's behalf. The Superintendent therefore noncommittally nodded. He was soon shaken out of his aplomb.

"Of course it's nonsense," Henry plunged on, "but I've got to tell you the story that's going around. Every time a teacher is transferred from a difficult school to an easy one, you pocket $150!"

"Who's been telling you that?" the Superintendent cried. Not only his own reputation, but the good repute of the school system was involved. Henry was unwilling, at first, to attach a name to the rumor. When the Superintendent pointed out the damage that might be done by letting such stories spread unchallenged, Henry identified a school. A friend of his, teaching there, had for 7 years unsuccessfully sought a transfer; another teacher, in the school only 2 years, had been transferred. And had whispered to her cronies that it cost her $300; $150 for the new principal, $150 for "downtown." Bill was in charge of transfers "downtown."

A quick check of the school records showed the Superintendent that the transferred teacher was Miss Madeleine Auer. Sent for, Miss Auer was all good nature, and frankness itself: "Yes, I gave Miss Atwood the $300 for the transfer. She is very kind. She gave me an easy class and never supervises me. I don't want the money back. You can keep your share. It's all right with me." Miss Atwood evidently told her recruits that she had to grease a palm at headquarters. (Her story is told in Chapter 19.)

Miss Auer's appearance, untidy and unclean, and her childish speech, made such a poor impression that she was referred to the Retirement Committee. She had been rated Satisfactory throughout her 25 years of teaching.

She told the Committee she was active in politics, yet could not name one Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court. She estimated the population of the United States at about 500,000. Her an-

swers to other questions were so manifestly blurred by senile deterioration that Miss Madeleine Auer was retired.

Following her retirement, Miss Auer asked the Superintendent what she should do. He suggested travel. Three months later, she sought his advice again, and he repeated: "Why don't you travel?"

"Oh, I can't!" she replied, "my back hurts. When you told me to travel, I bought $100 worth of Greyhound Bus tickets. I've been south to Miami, New Orleans, St. Louis, east to New York, Newark, and many other interesting places. I've been traveling so much my back aches. I know travel is educational, but I'm going to stay home until my back stops aching."

Miss Auer felt that she had to acknowledge her pension check with a personal letter to the Superintendent; he has had a letter from her every month for over 7 years. We quote from three successive recent letters:

"Dear Sir: I received my pension check OK this A.M. My hotel is very nice but it is full of spies and FBI men. They are very nice and don't look like spies but they are . . ."

"Dear Sir: I received my pension check OK at 1 P.M. It was late in distribution at the Charleston Hotel. There is a man here with a moustache and a beard. There is a very pretty dark woman with him. They are spies. They can't fool me. I reported them to the FBI . . ."

"Dear Sir: I received my pension check OK this A.M. The man with the beard is not a spy. He used to be a floor-walker in Higman's Department Store. He is looking for a job. I think he likes me. Do you think I should marry him? His sister is pretty. She works for an insurance company. She is not a spy, but she looks like a spy."

In another note, Miss Auer said: "I came up north and stopped off at Philadelphia. It is a beautiful city. It has the Liberty Bell. It is very old and it is cracked. They should repair it. I am

sending you a picture postcard of the Liberty Bell and its crack."

Reflecting that Miss Auer might still be teaching, had she not been involved in the bribery case, one wonders how early in her career Miss Auer's mentality cracked, and how many of her former pupils are in need of repair.

Sometimes the process of senile deterioration is speeded by other afflictions. This happened to Dr. Grayson Armand, a high-school principal in the middle states. Dr. Armand had had a long and highly successful career, first as a teacher, then for 28 years as principal, in spite of three manic-depressive attacks, which he had weathered—one of them in a clinic—with the help of two sabbatical leaves. The second of these leaves was about to end, when administrative officers and teachers in his school protested his return.

The pages of this book could be filled with transcripts from the record of the investigation of Dr. Armand. The few excerpts that follow are representative of the faculty statements:

Dr. Randall (Teacher in charge of school discipline): "Some years ago, Dr. Armand was a very normal, fair-minded man. He did an excellent job. He was a stimulus to the school. For some 4 years now, however, I cannot say that. He has incurred ill-feeling in the community, among the faculty and the students . . . He tours the building. Our hall monitors are National Honor Society boys or football team boys. They know what to do. But if he sees a piece of paper on the floor, he insults them and scares them. Many times they have come to me. I say, 'Forget it! He doesn't feel well today. He's a little upset . . .'"

Dr. Goodrich: "There has been, many times in the past few years, gossip among the children that he was tipsy. There were times when he couldn't walk in a straight line. At other times he would walk along the main hall with his hat on, and wave to teachers through the doors . . . On one occasion the student leader of the National Honor Society came to me and asked:

'Dr. Goodrich, is there any possibility of keeping Dr. Armand out of the Honor Society meetings? He comes in drunk and behaves like a boor.' . . . During the past year, he has been drunk in school at least half a dozen times. He waves his hands, stares into space, and talks to himself. The whole school is aware of these episodes."

Miss Richards: "On the other hand, he keeps to himself a lot. Many times, when teachers greet him in the hall, he simply walks by as though they are empty space. Many feel that he is deliberately refusing to return their greetings. It has got so the faculty members say they will not speak to him unless he speaks first . . . Once he arrives, he very seldom goes out of his office . . . Three years ago, he had double locks placed on the office doors."

When the Superintendent asked the reason for the double locks, the teachers were reluctant to answer. Only after they were reminded that this was not a personal matter, but a deep concern involving over 2,000 children, did they speak further.

Dr. Goodrich: "He often had tea or coffee served as late as 5 or 6 in the evening. On some occasions his wife was waiting outside the school, in their car. He would instruct the custodial help, the man who was supposed to close his office, to inform his wife that he had left. He would be in his office with Miss Carson."

Superintendent: "What did the teachers think?"

Dr. Goodrich: "That, I could not say. The children think that Miss Carson is his 'dame.' They use the word 'dame.' We do know that, 2 years ago, he put Miss Carson in charge of personnel, and all teachers have to go through her before they can see him."

Superintendent: "Does that apply to pupils and parents as well?"

Dr. Goodrich: "Yes. One parent expressed her anger quite publicly. She had been kept waiting 30 minutes after seeing

Miss Carson. During all that time, Miss Carson was in the inner office with Dr. Armand."

Miss Richards: "The officers of the PTA complained to me last year. He refuses to allow the parents to plan or to run their own meetings . . . On one occasion, when I was holding a department conference, he interrupted, took over, and talked until the end of the period. When the teachers had gone, he turned to me and said: 'Ethel, just leave me the illusion that I am principal.' "

Just one report of the psychiatrist takes 27 pages. The letter of referral to the psychiatrist from the Superintendent, enclosing copies of the teachers' voluminous statements, asked some specific questions:

"In the light of the reports I have sent you:

"1. Is it safe to place Dr. Armand in charge of the safety and education of 2,000 children?

"2. Is it advisable to have him in a school where the relations with the faculty are alleged to be severely strained? His 'communication' with his faculty 'is greatly limited.'

"3. Is it advisable to permit this principal to return to active service in the light of the alleged poor relations with the community?

"4. Is he fit to be in charge of a large high school in the light of his repeated mental difficulties? His family physician states that he has suffered three attacks of manic depression.

"Dr. Armand will of course make many self-serving statements. Please bear in mind that his specialty is English."

Toward the end of the summer, when his sabbatical leave was almost over, Dr. Armand went to the psychiatrist's accompanied by his wife. The psychiatrist records: "She asserted that nobody knew her husband better than she did and as far as she was concerned he was perfectly well, completely well . . . 'If he is absent from his duties even 5 minutes on the first day of school, it would be a terrible thing for him in a community that knows

him so long and regards him so highly.' She then cited various instances of apparently recent date wherein persons encountered on the street, in the local bank, delivery men, newsstand proprietor, etc. had all hailed him with considerable amiability, endorsement, good wishes, and feelings of gratitude that he had returned. I pointed out to her that none of these people was among his professional colleagues at school—the latter being the area where the complaints arose. I also pointed out that I had been informed by the School Board that numerous complaints about him had accrued from among the pupils and their parents. Both Dr. and Mrs. Armand expressed disbelief in my assertion; in fact, they conveyed by their facial expression and words that they thought such a statement was both incredible and impossible. I was told by them that he had had telephone conversations with more than one of his faculty during which sincere joy had been expressed by the teacher that the principal had returned and would be back in school on Monday. Mrs. Armand parenthetically inserted the comment: 'Of course, he naturally telephoned teachers toward whom he felt quite friendly.' Dr. Armand stated: 'Everybody likes me.'"

Since the mental condition of the head of a large school is of prime importance, since such a person perforce holds a prominent position in the community, and since Dr. Armand had taken an active part in community affairs—head of the YMCA fund drive for a new building, Chairman of the Community Chest, and the like—it was with grave and most careful consideration that his examination went on. Dr. Armand pointed out that, 3 years before, on his 25th anniversary as principal of Roosevelt High, the PTA had presented him with a gold fountain pen, and the faculty had given him a fine television set.

After interviews totaling over 7 hours, Dr. Armand said: "Doctor, people try hard to get their children into Roosevelt High School. It is that widely and highly regarded." The psychiatrist smiled and replied: "Well, Dr. Armand, that's good

enough for me. I think we have talked enough now. I will do all I can to try and help you."

Dr. Armand rose, smiling, and said: "I'm glad, very glad, that it is good enough." At the door, he called his wife, and asked the psychiatrist to repeat what he had said. Mrs. Armand, assuming that the report would be favorable, then declared: "I told the Superintendent that, if he did not accept a favorable report from you, there would be other psychiatrists we could see that would be friendly; I told him that there would be ways to fight."

Of the lengthy report of the psychiatrist, these passages are quoted from the summation: "To your questions as to whether Dr. Armand is fit to remain as principal, I answer an unequivocal NO—if I consider them only in the light of the reports you have sent me. I only wonder why, in some of your questions, you use the word 'alleged' concerning what I have been led to believe are facts, repeatedly demonstrated and corroborated from multiple witnesses . . .

"When, however, objectively, as an examining psychiatrist, I spend hours with a man and completely fail to demonstrate to my own clinical satisfaction that he is psychotic, and when I do a Rorschach test that fully confirms my clinical opinion, then I can only say to you that now, this day, the man presents satisfactory evidence of recovery from an episode of mental illness. He is, as a result of recovery, the same man, broadly speaking, that he has always been—except for whatever minor or major alterations in his personality have been induced by the aging process to which all of us are subject: i.e., the personality changes, if any, induced by the presence of some degree of cerebral arteriosclerosis. It seems to me that the only way such personality changes can be demonstrated (whether they happen to be inimical to the safety and education of nearly 2,000 students, etc.) is to decide, from an administrative viewpoint, whether or not to risk testing the man in his professional milieu and duties.

"The historical data provided me by the School Board contain various references by observers to the past 4 to 6 years as being the span of time during which Dr. Armand's behavior has been peculiar and unpredictable. Just how much of this behavior pattern was representative of the manic-depressive pattern, and how much might be due to cerebral arteriosclerosis 'contamination,' it is impossible to say with any accuracy; my subjective professional opinion is that it was an admixture of both elements, which finally culminated in a true depressive reaction which was initially manifested by the confusional state type of a cerebral arteriosclerotic psychotic episode. Anyhow, both psychotic elements have cleared up, and the man is not psychotic at this time. This statement does not mean, at all, that he is not likely, from a statistical viewpoint, to have additional attacks of mental illness. It is a well-known clinical fact that many individuals who have had manic-depressive illnesses suffer more frequent attacks in the later decades of their lives. Likewise, in these later decades, the psycho-physiological stresses resulting from effective psychotic experiences are regarded as probably contributing to the acceleration of the aging (arteriosclerotic) process. When this situation obtains, it is easily seen why the later recurrent manic-depressive attacks may be masked by, or complicated by, superimposed organic cerebral arteriosclerotic attacks. This is evidently what occurred in Dr. Armand's illness.

"Thus, from a theoretical and statistical viewpoint, it is reasonable to assume that Dr. Armand's cyclothymic (hypomanic) personality structure, his history of three attacks of manic-depressive illness (depressed type), the recent 4 to 6 years of recorded and corroborated aberrant, abnormal behavior patterns (with his evident complete lack of insight), the culmination of the 4- to 6-year history in an organic syndrome of psychotic proportions, followed subsequently by a typical depressive reaction, and the demonstrable evidence of some degree of arteriosclerosis (even though his intellectual capacity at present seems quite

intact) . . . augur for at least a 50% possibility that he will become mentally sick, in psychotic degree, again . . .

"The only basis on which administrative action to effect retirement of this man could be justified, in my opinion, is to declare that, upon the basis of the validated history and the considerations I have indicated, the School Board is unwilling to assume what is definitely a calculated risk.

"It seems very unfortunate indeed, in retrospect, that administrative action was not taken at a time when it could have been unqualifiedly justified on a medical-psychiatric basis: at the time of his second actual psychotic episode . . . I can tell you now without any doubt or equivocation that if the history with which you have provided me is totally valid in all respects, then those *facts,* together with his admitted and known three periods of major mental illness, constitute a definite and legitimate psychiatric basis upon which to base any administrative procedures regarding this man's employment. But I repeat, that is the only basis for administrative action, as I see the case. He provides us today with absolutely nothing for such purposes which can, in all medical and psychiatric good conscience, be ethically, morally, or legally sustained.

"A final word, which is purely subjective: If this man were a relative of mine, or my own father, I would feel—from the viewpoint of a psychiatrist—that it would be too much of an unfavorable risk for all concerned, and especially the man himself, to continue to subject him to the attempt to function as Principal—in spite of the fact that his pride, vanity, and need for ego gratification combine to make him feel that 'the breath of life' would be taken from him if he is not permitted to resume his role at Roosevelt High School. Although such deprivation would undoubtedly be a tremendous blow to his ego and might induce suicidal preoccupation, or suicidal attempt, or rapidly induce another psychotic episode, he does have some assets as buffers against such sequences. In contrast to many other men

in elder years who are relieved of their duties, he has many outside interests, and a history of hobbies and of participation in community affairs. With proper guidance, if he would accept it, he might be induced to turn his energies in these constructive directions rather than into introspection, self-depreciation, and depression."

On the basis of these considerations, of which we have given only the gist, the Superintendent recommended that Dr. Armand be retired.

At this point, he observed, "Mrs. Armand got very busy and pulled all her social, political, community, personal, and religious strings. Every legal and quasi-legal obstacle was put in the path of procedure. The head of the city's high school division was a personal friend of Mrs. Armand and this did not make matters easier; indeed, he made it most difficult to continue the case."

All these proceedings, of course, were secret. In the meantime, Dr. Armand's sabbatical leave having expired, he was back at school. Although a classroom teacher might be suspended, or assigned to idle in the Superintendent's office while her fitness to teach were being determined, this principal was permitted to carry on his work undisturbed, perhaps to continue mishandling his faculty and pupils, apparently on the assumption that a principal is innocent of mental illness until found guilty.

Dr. Armand struck out at those moving for his removal. He charged that a member of the School Board was behind the move to oust him, and he wrote to the psychiatrist: "Who does this pompous ass think he is? He makes big capital out of the fact that he is a member of the School Board. Do you know what a person must do, as a rule, to become a member of this august body? He must hang around political clubs for years, and learn to obey the club leader. Did you ever know a political club leader? That's about the lowest rung of the ladder. You can't go much lower than that. All the members of our present Board are of the same stripe, all nonentities, all political hacks, ambi-

tious hacks . . . What have they contributed, what can they contribute, to education? They are the tragedy of our educational system, nonentities—some of them incapable of speaking good English—who are supposed to guide our educators and to establish educational policy. The lawyer, the salesman, the housewife, the insurance agent, the bookkeeper, on appointment to the School Board suddenly burgeons into an educational expert. It is a miracle, and a testimonial to the high quality of the teaching staff, that our schools on the whole do a very good job . . . I have told you what I did not dare express for many years, and now I feel much better. Don't think I am an exception: I have said what all of us think and for fear of reprisals have not dared to say . . . And no nonentity will deprive me of my right to practice my profession."

No one did deprive Dr. Armand of that right. He and Mrs. Armand succeeded in protracting the proceedings through a year and a half, until Dr. Armand reached the age of mandatory retirement. After long years of moody, inept, unwise, unbalanced, and antagonistic supervision, the teachers and children of Roosevelt High School found relief.

At this point, it may be significant to present the story of Miss Emma Ziegler, a high-school teacher aged 55, who had taught for 36 Satisfactory years. Miss Ziegler had sustained a hip fracture on falling in school, and was absent on sick leave from the time of her fall, December 11, until the end of June. On examination in September, she was thought to be accident prone, and afflicted with "hypertension; arteriosclerosis, generalized."

Her principal's report declared that Miss Ziegler "ranks lowest in teaching ability and efficiency" of the high school's thirteen English teachers. She "has trouble trying to obtain the willing cooperation and discipline necessary for instruction . . . Miss Ziegler talks too much, often interrupts pupils and enlarges upon their answers herself, without allowing for inter-pupil exchange of ideas. Thus, instead of working with the youngsters, she

creates a strained atmosphere of bored and passive inattention or else one of noisy restlessness."

The psychiatrist noted: "Miss Ziegler blames a good deal of her difficulty at school on her principal . . . She states there are other teachers who have had similar difficulty because of the principal . . . The problem is complicated by the charges she makes against her principal of unkindness, harshness, severe and unjustifiable criticism, and fault-finding even in the presence of children. She refuses retirement and claims that if some consideration is shown for her condition she can continue to teach . . .

"Whether this teacher should be allowed to continue her work or be asked to retire must depend in great measure on the quality of the service rendered. It has not been our policy to recommend retirement because of the existence of hypertension, unless this hypertension leads to excessive absence or poor teaching. In this instance, the past attendance record of the teacher shows no undue absence. If her charges against her principal are substantiated, then his rating reports must be discounted. If they are not substantiated, then she is an ineffective, sick teacher, who should be retired because of her hypertension."

Before the Retirement Committee, Miss Ziegler told "a long story" of persecution by her principal, who, she stated, "has been mentally ill for a long time, as everybody in school knows; and high officials know, but they don't do anything about it. A high-school principal is a privileged person. The whole community including the students talk about this man. Why, he walks through the corridors talking to himself and looking into space. He upsets me every time he comes into my room, with that silly grin upon his face. Never has he offered me a single solitary constructive suggestion; never has he found a single thing in my classroom worthy of praise. He has broken my health and my spirit. It's no use complaining, because he is protected by the head of the high-school division. Many of our teachers have complained officially to headquarters. Nothing has been

done. I don't want to prolong the agony. You don't have to vote to retire me; I shall send in my retirement application."

Miss Emma Ziegler applied for and was granted retirement.

Note that the medical report made the desirability of Miss Ziegler's retirement depend upon the validity of the principal's charges, upon her failure to substantiate her protests against her principal. That principal was Dr. Grayson Armand, whose story has just been told. This is one teacher for whom his retirement came too late to bring relief.

Steps should be taken to support the aging teacher, to fortify her with sound psychiatric counsel. However gradual the involutionary process is, once it has started, it is likely to move unchecked to its grim ending; but perhaps by prompt treatment its pace can be slowed.

Awareness of the condition is essential for the safeguarding and proper teaching of children. Pleasant conditions of retirement should be afforded the ill teacher, while healthy recruits are sought, so that sound classroom conditions can be maintained.

17

Epilepsy

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT that epilepsy, whether it be *petit mal* or *grand mal,* interferes with the proper management of a classroom, is hardly conducive to effective teaching, and is a source of special danger to the teacher if not the children. It is not always easy, however, for supervisors, who are seldom physicians, to identify the disease, while those afflicted are even less ready to admit it.

Is it coincidence that, when a teacher's record is studied as the result of a convulsive seizure, there seems invariably a history of prior dissatisfaction with her work? The pupils have protested that the teacher is overstrict, unfair, scolding; the supervisors note that there have been many causes for complaint. Three instances of such afflictions are here briefly described.

Joseph Tilden, after 25 years of Satisfactory service, was found by his principal on responding to an emergency call, prone on the floor of his classroom, unconscious, and foaming at the mouth. Mr. Tilden was taken to a hospital, where he recovered and was allowed to go home.

The teacher attributed his fainting spell to a climactic headache. Headaches had bothered him every three weeks or so for 2 years, he said, perhaps as a result of a fractured skull in an automobile accident. A month after the first seizure, unfortunately, Mr. Tilden again fell unconscious in the classroom. Summer intervened, but in the fall Mr. Tilden was told not to return to school until he had had a complete check in a hospital.

This he underwent, from September 10 to September 24. No specific ailment was noted and, although the school doctor recommended a term's leave of absence, Mr. Tilden returned to his classes. On November 16, the principal was again called to Mr. Tilden's classroom, where the teacher was again lying unconscious in front of his apprehensive class.

Before the Retirement Committee, Mr. Tilden appeared with an advisor. The principal said that, "although Mr. Tilden had always been rated Satisfactory, he was actually an unsatisfactory teacher. He was considered mean and grouchy, and had always had considerable difficulty with other teachers, with supervisors, and with pupils."

The medical examiner stated that Mr. Tilden's illness was in all probability *grand mal*—incurable.

Mr. Tilden's advisor asked for and was given permission to speak: "I agree that Mr. Tilden should be retired; he is sick. I regret, however, that his principal made references to his personality and to his relationship with his pupils and colleagues, because such things were never reflected in his ratings. I ask that the principal withdraw his remarks." The principal withdrew his remarks and asked that his characterization of the teacher be expunged from the record. This was done, then Joseph Tilden was retired.

Clearer still is the history of Miss Elizabeth Hallenbeck, who at 34 had had 13 years of Satisfactory teaching. After a seizure "resembling epilepsy, in the presence of her class," the principal sent Miss Hallenbeck home. She then requested an examination of the teacher, stating:

"Miss Hallenbeck started with these seizures 4 years ago. She was granted a sabbatical leave, then a term's leave of absence without pay. She wanted another sabbatical leave but found she was not eligible. Her relations with pupils and fellow teachers have never been good because of her bad disposition. She seems to be angry most of the time and her treatment of the children

is harsh and unkind. I have had the feeling for a long time that she doesn't like children—nor, for that matter, anyone else."

The doctor's diagnosis was "Premature menopause with fainting spells; probably epilepsy." Miss Hallenbeck admitted that several times in the past year she had had seizures and had lost consciousness. She was retired.

The unwillingness of a teacher to admit, or even to recognize, the danger of epileptic seizures is exemplified in the story of Louis Garkel, a 59-year-old teacher in a western state, with 38 years of Satisfactory service. His work, however, was punctuated with three sabbatical leaves and three term leaves for the restoration of health. The principal reported Mr. Garkel when he became unconscious in class. The school nurse recommended that he be sent to a hospital, but by the time the ambulance came Mr. Garkel had recovered consciousness and refused to go. The principal had two teachers accompany him to his home in a taxi.

With the principal's request that Mr. Garkel be examined came the following report: "Mr. Garkel has had a great many years of service. His work is barely passable. Of late years his personality seems to have undergone a change. He has developed a most sour disposition. He has become cynical and he resents suggestions for improvement. He is a bad influence upon teachers and pupils alike. There isn't a spark of enthusiasm left in him. He comes to school for the purpose of drawing his check at the end of the month and has no other interest in his work. Technically, I have not been able to rate him Unsatisfactory. But that doesn't mean he is now or has been a satisfactory teacher for many years. I am told that he was never a good teacher and that even early in his career he was cynical, sarcastic, harsh, and peculiar. His life as a teacher has been an unhappy one, unhappy for him and for his pupils. He has never married. According to Mr. Garkel, 'women are no-good parasites.' He has frequently voiced such sentiments: 'Women are not fit to be supervisors.' 'Women are followers, not leaders.' 'If I had my way, I'd fire

all women supervisors.' 'A woman has no brains.' Most of the teachers pay little attention to Mr. Garkel, but he is admired by some of the younger teachers who think he has the courage to speak out. He is a disturbing influence: selfish, boastful, cruel, hypercritical, conceited; in brief, an ugly person."

Mr. Garkel told the physician this was the first time he had ever fainted; he thought he was poisoned eating pork. The doctor felt there was more to the matter, and suggested referral to a psychiatrist.

To the psychiatrist, Mr. Garkel mentioned another fainting spell, 20 years before, "caused by a digestive upset from eating lobster à la Newburg." He admitted two or three other fainting attacks, and now said that the recent one was probably due to his weakness after influenza. The doctor diagnosed *grand mal* and recommended that Mr. Garkel be retired.

The Retirement Board was given a letter from the teacher's personal physician: "Mr. Louis Garkel fainted once in the classroom as a result of severe mental and physical stress. I removed a small tumor from his right buttock and two moles from his face. I am glad to state that his general health is good, except for a recent mild attack of influenza. He returned to school sooner than he should have. I examined him again today and found him to be in excellent health. I have no definite evidence that he is suffering from *grand mal.*"

Mr. Garkel declared: "I am being railroaded out of the school system. The trouble is that the school system is under petticoat government. Small minds. This is my reward for 40 years of service. That's why the schools are suffering from low teacher morale. The system is heartless."

Louis Garkel was retired.

There is not likely to be an outburst of disorder, when an epileptic teacher falls frothing in front of the class. But the very spectacle is a frightening one, thrusting upon young sensibilities

an upsetting experience that may, for a long period, cause recurrent nightmares and grisly fancies. The first pulse of panic, indeed, will probably be a lifelong recurrent memory in anyone who has sat in a classroom and seen the teacher collapse in an epileptic fit. Perhaps a fuller check of the background of a prospective teacher will reduce the likelihood of such a harrowing experience.

18

Alcoholism

THE USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES is so widespread, and in most communities so taken for granted, that few persons recognize that alcoholism is a frequent and insidious addiction and disease. The "social drinker," who joins a convivial group in pleasant libation, or the man who sips his regular cocktail before dinner, is a far cry from those in whom the craving for drink is a recurrent and irresistible call. The workers in such groups as Alcoholics Anonymous, and the police who see the results of drunken driving, have a clearer view of the dangers that go hand in hand with strong drink.

In most cases, an alcoholic has difficulty in social adjustment, antedating and perhaps leading to the overindulgence in drink. For the emotionally immature, unable to look steadily and clearly at the hard facts of life, alcohol is a comforting anodyne. It blots out the unpleasant immediate strain, substituting a relief from tensions and a passage from reality into a maudlin but endurable, a misty but at the same time rosy, vacuous world of forgetfulness, on the brink—and sometimes over the border—of oblivion.

Chronic alcoholism is marked by the presence of one or more of these symptoms: inability to keep a promise; stubbornness; suspicion; resentment and hostility; brutality; carelessness in dress and appearance; lowering of ethical standards; neglect of family; placing blame on others; sluggishness; retardation of thought; mental deterioration; stupor. The chronic alcoholic cannot face

reality without the false comfort of alcohol; yet he cannot achieve adjustment to reality as long as he resorts to alcohol. Certainly the guidance of children should not be entrusted to one who drinks excessively.

Mrs. Mildred Langdon, aged 49, had been rated Satisfactory for her 28 years of teaching home economics in a southern high school. Then her principal wrote that she had exhausted his patience. "She is addicted to alcohol, and has promised to give it up so often that I have completely lost confidence in her. Her promises mean nothing. Your medical doctor was here and found her in a drunken stupor. The students, parents, and faculty know about her and wonder why she is permitted to remain in school. They think she must have political influence . . . I have been patient; I have hoped for improvement; but to no avail."

To the medical doctor who found her lying down in the teachers' room of the Calhoun High School, a wet towel on her head, Mrs. Langdon stated that she never drinks alcohol in any form. She said she was "in shock," but could give no details. The odor of alcohol was on her breath.

To the psychiatrist, she stated that she occasionally took a single drink, but later let slip the fact that her family doctor had told her to throw the liquor away. She said that every 2 weeks she emptied the liquor bottles into the sink, but her husband ordered more. She said he had "the mental outlook of a 10-year-old child." She occasionally took "a cat nip" with her husband, she said, to keep him in good humor.

Before the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Langdon's most prominent feature was her red, bulbous nose. She declared that she drank "normally," "socially," "never alone." She felt that the hearing was "much ado about nothing." To her surprised indignation, Mrs. Mildred Langdon was retired.

Alcoholism seems to strike at any age. Ronald Sawyer was 46, with 19 Satisfactory years of teaching, when the principal

wrote: "I have put up with him as long as I can, but we are at the end of the trail." Frances Sorel was 57, with 34 Satisfactory years of teaching in a southern state. She was finally checked because of excessive absence. Her absences fell upon a Friday or a Monday, or on the days after a holiday. "I think it is alcoholism," said her principal, "but I cannot prove it. She used to be a good teacher, is still a good classroom teacher, but her constant absence upsets the school and is harmful to the children in her classes. I have had a few complaints about her absence from parents. The children like her."

Although Mrs. Sorel admitted that she had drunk excessively during the past 2 months, the psychiatrist found no immediate reason for recommending her retirement. After her next absence, she was examined again. Now the report read: "It is urgent that Mrs. Sorel be immediately separated from active service. She must not be near children, as she is suffering from a highly contagious venereal disease and mental illness."

Mrs. Frances Sorel was retired.

Mrs. Sylvia Tesley, when only 43, with 18 years of Satisfactory service, had moved and been transferred to a new school in an excellent neighborhood of her midwestern city. The principal was surprised to note that she came to school, at the beginning of the term, with every sign of "a serious hangover . . . At 2:30 she was quite incoherent, and did not seem to comprehend what was being said to her."

Principal Bailey had to keep constant watch on Mrs. Tesley. Here are extracts from his detailed report:

"*September 13.* I spoke with her on the subject of class control and urged her not to ignore rudeness and obvious naughtiness. Mrs. Tesley was very vague, and endeavored to turn me aside with a torrent of explanations and excuses . . .

"*September 29.* As I opened the door of Mrs. Tesley's room, one of the girls leaped over the wastebasket. Not seeing me, she

leaped over it again . . . In the ensuing weeks, I found children lying on top of the table in the corner of the room, under it, behind it, hiding in the clothes closet, and wandering about the building . . .

"*October 4.* Through the door, I saw a boy balancing a glass jar on his head. Before I entered, he tossed it to another boy, who tossed it back . . .

"*October 10.* A mother called to say that Mrs. Tesley was allowing one of the boys to paint the girls with ink. Several dresses had been ruined.

"*October 13.* Mrs. Tesley was so befuddled that she failed to see and reprove a boy who was carrying another boy about the room . . .

"*October 24.* Mrs. Tesley was more vague and futile than heretofore. By 2:30 the uproar was such that I went into the room. When it became evident that I intended to remain, Mrs. Tesley picked up a piece of chalk and began writing answers to a table she had on the blackboard. The day before, I had spent a long time teaching the class always to complete the equation, never to build a table column by column. It must have occurred to some of the children that Mrs. Tesley hadn't heard or remembered."

On November 14, finding Mrs. Tesley again—as often the class had smelled her—reeking of liquor and onions, Mr. Bailey finally called the superintendent, and was directed to send her home.

The psychiatrist found Mrs. Tesley "relevant and coherent throughout; the stream of mental activity seemed within normal limits, and her affect was evidently adequate and appropriate . . . She submitted the opinion that she had run afoul of her principal because of their different attitudes regarding the value of progressive education methods. Mrs. Tesley stated that she had been trained in these methods, believed in them, and sought to carry them out—all of which ran contrary to the opinion and administrative instructions of the principal.

"Mrs. Tesley did not hesitate to admit that she drank, but

immediately followed this admission with qualifications as to time and place. She flatly denied drinking or tippling during the school week. 'Do they think I'm a fool?' she exclaimed . . . If the statements in the principal's letter are actually as objective as they seem, then we are obviously dealing with a case of chronic alcoholism. Mrs. Tesley's statements to me then become obvious rationalizations, evasions, and subterfuges—the triad of the alcoholic's expressed thinking and feeling."

The psychiatrist recommended a term's leave of absence, during which Mrs. Tesley should undergo psychiatric treatment.

Mrs. Tesley came to the Superintendent early in September, prior to the opening of school. "No," she said; "I didn't take any psychiatric treatment—nor do I need any. What I needed was a man—and I found one. A Texan, 6 foot 3 and every inch a man. Yes sir, every inch a man. Would you like to see him? He is waiting for me in the office outside."

The Superintendent "liked" to see him. "Meet Mr. Nowell, Mr. George Nowell. George, this is Dr. Howell, a big bad wolf. Aren't you afraid of him?"

George smiled. "No ma'am. I ain't afraid of no man."

George Nowell was a handsome fellow, not more than 25, with soft grey eyes, ruddy complexion, a thin straight nose, and gleaming teeth.

"We sure are going to be very happy," Sylvia Tesley said.

"We sure are," echoed George.

"And we're going to live in Texas, aren't we, George?"

"We sure are," concurred George.

Sylvia Tesley took her triumphant leave. And the Superintendent hoped that George would be able to teach her how to hold her liquor.

Alcoholism debases not only the victim but the children in the classroom. They lose respect for the teacher, yet at the same time lose fear of the evil, for does not *the teacher* indulge? Thus the

ide of youth misguides it; all standards grow slack. The ungsters enjoy their belittling of the tipsy teacher, and in that age, all values fall.

By her own lowered ethical standards and her shiftlessness, and the reaction she induces in her pupils, the alcoholic teacher—wever seemingly controlled, however she deludes herself that one suspects that she "takes a little nip" outside of school—ercises a degrading force that weakens the moral fiber of the ildren. This may later manifest itself, through activities re-ote from indulgence in alcohol, in many adult patterns of malad-stment and misconduct.

19

Dishonesty and Kleptomania

As far back as the ancient Greeks it was proverbial that "No man is above the influence of gain." More cynically—or bluntly—in later times we say "Every man has his price." Shakespeare recognized the common condition: "To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand." Yet more soberly, food for thought is provided in the observation of Shakespeare's contemporary, John Lyly: "He that loseth his honesty hath nothing else to lose."

If honesty is one of the cardinal virtues, if society genuinely desires that the growing generation be reared in the spirit of probity and integrity, it is essential that the teachers of our children possess these qualities. They need not flaunt them; they should not vaunt them in classroom lecture and morning moral harangue. They should merely manifest them in their own quiet actions, in their everyday attitudes and deeds. Children are quick to notice any difference between admonition and act.

Actions that may be tolerated or condoned in others are more reprehensible among those whose position makes them a model or a guide that children incline to follow. It may be hard to keep pace with a good example, but it is woefully easy to go along with a bad one. *Facilis descensus Averni:* "Easy is the downward road to Hell. Night and Day the portals of the underworld stand wide: but to recall thy step and issue to the upper air—there is the toil and there the task!"

How the children will be influenced is always the proper ques-

tion. Often it is a perplexing one. If a teacher is continually guilty of pilfering school supplies—even on occasion having a child help her carry some home—what effect will this have on the child's attitude toward theft? One teacher had bookshelves in her house built with wood from the school's supply, given her by the shop teacher. But what about a teacher who may have been guilty of one dishonest deed, long ago, with no blemish upon her name and an excellent teaching record? If a supervisor, years later, by accident discovers this early deed, is it his duty to report it and have the teacher dismissed? Or has she in years of good service expiated her crime? Is there an ethical 'statute of limitations'? The time and the frequency, as well as the seriousness, of the misconduct must all be weighed in the light of the effect on the children.

The notion that evil brings its own punishment is illustrated in the story of the school clerk, Katherine M. Bennett, whose misdoing hung over her for 20 years.

After one of the other cases discussed in this book, a Superintendent sent out a letter reminding principals of the regulation that they report all teachers manifesting nervous or mental disorder. Miss Bennett's principal reported her, with these words: "I am completely satisfied with her services and I consider her to be a valuable member of my faculty. Her reports, payrolls, etc. are models of perfection and accuracy . . . She is nervous about telephone calls because they interrupt her work; and she has never gotten over her fear of the visits of the assistant superintendent and other officials, upon whom she makes a poor impression because of her nervousness . . . I repeat that I have no fault to find with her work; I report her only to comply fully with the directive of the Superintendent."

A conscientious principal, thought the Superintendent. To match this quality, he sent for Miss Bennett's service record card. He was brought 2 cards. One Katherine Mary Bennett was a high-school teacher—whose principal at once sent a report in

glowing terms. The other Katherine Mary Bennett was the clerk, "a valuable member of the faculty." The two were born on the same day, attended the same schools, and graduated on the same day.

Unsmilingly, the two Miss Bennetts looked at one another across the Superintendent's desk. "Yes," said the clerk Miss Bennett, "we are cousins, but because of a family quarrel we haven't seen each other in many years."

The Superintendent asked the clerk the name of her high-school principal; she could not recall. Teacher Miss Bennett remembered. Nor could Clerk Bennett remember the name of a single teacher. The Superintendent asked Teacher Bennett to step outside, then said to the clerk: "You are ill, or you never went to that high school. Tell me the story."

"I'm glad this has happened," Clerk Bennett said, as tears streamed down her cheeks. "For 20 years it's been on my conscience. I'm glad it's over now!"

Quickly she poured forth her tale. Her cousin, whose name was like hers, was the bright one; her parents always used to point to that shining example. She herself had left school after 6B, but later took a course in business school. Hearing that there was an examination for school clerk, she took it and passed it. Then she was asked to bring credentials of her graduation from high school. What could she do? She wrote for records to the schools her cousin had attended; the names were the same; and she submitted these records as her own. She was appointed and had served well for 20 years.

Because of the length and excellent character of her service, no charges were brought against Clerk Bennett; she was permitted to retire.

The next winter the Superintendent met the retired Katherine M. Bennett, with her arms full of Christmas presents. "I wish my hands were free," she said, "so I could shake your hand and thank you for what you have done for me. I have a fine job as secretary

in a patent attorney's office. I am earning more than I did at school. But that's not important: what matters is that I have begun to live. My fears have vanished. I enjoy the rain, the snow, the heat and the cold, the buses, the streets and the crowds. I used to shrink from everybody and everything. A life's burden has been lifted from my shoulders."

For 20 years, Miss Bennett had punished herself for a crime of which not another soul was aware.

Just where the borderline between proper conduct and downright dishonesty lies, is sometimes hard to say. Is there a sharp demarcation, or a vague domain of disputable ground? After the death of a school teacher long noted for her radical ideas and opposition to the conservative School Board, her large library was sold; in it were found a number of books with the stamp of the Department of Education. The matter was given considerable publicity; here was the chance for the Board to besmirch the still significant name of a powerful opponent. The Board's Committee, however, declared that it is natural for a teacher to have school books at home; she presumably uses them in preparing her lessons; and for one so long in the service the number of books found in this case was not excessive. There was no stigma of dishonesty.

A teacher must, nevertheless, be careful in such matters as the use of school stationery and supplies. Children may come to feel that petty pilfering is natural and blameless. Is there a difference in kind, or only in degree, when much of the stone in the superintendent's new house, and all of the gravel for his driveway, turned out to be material from the construction department of the city's school system?

It is, of course, only dishonesty on a fairly large scale, or of a sort that reaches beyond the schoolroom into the wider community, that is likely to come to official attention. And sometimes connivance keeps such a teacher in her job.

Such seems to have been the case with Mrs. Helen Thornton, who for many years was considered a thoroughly competent teacher. Her history illuminates several aspects of this book's concern. Here is a woman who has ridden rough-shod over more than one of the fundamental principles of the moral code. She found friends, and a psychiatrist, to defend her, and is still teaching. Her story is worth especial attention. Let us begin it in the words of the Superintendent:

"Helen was clever and versatile. She taught in elementary school and practiced law after school hours and, when she could 'get away with it,' during school hours. She kept steady company with two men at the same time, one a school teacher who had saved $5,000, one a penniless lawyer. Before long she had the one's money and the other's hand. She used the $5,000 to furnish her new home.

"Wishing to impress her lawyer husband, Mrs. Thornton borrowed money from several banks and purchased Oriental rugs, tapestries, silverware, linen, porcelain mirrors, paintings, silken bed sheets. After completing the furnishing, she declared herself bankrupt.

"Complaints from banks, department stores, antique dealers and art shops began pouring into my office. The complainants had been duped and swindled, and wanted the School Board to make good.

"I sent for the young woman. She arrived breathing defiance, and demanded to know upon what legal authority she had been summoned. I told her that the question was not pertinent since she had come. I observed her closely. She was then about 30 years of age, tall and well proportioned. Her blond hair and blue eyes lent her an air of detached innocence and childlike naïveté.

" 'Tell me,' I inquired, 'why you borrowed large sums of money you knew you could not repay. You were able to secure the loans by virtue of your steady employment as a teacher. Tell me also about the $5,000 you received from the teacher to whom you

were allegedly engaged. He has informed me that the money has not been returned to him.'

" 'You are not a lawyer and I advise you to curb your tongue,' she threatened. 'My husband and I know the law, and everything we did was within the law.'

" 'You are quite right,' I responded. 'I do not know the law. But I do know the difference between right and wrong, between honesty and dishonesty; and that seems to be something you and your lawyer husband do not know. For your special aptitudes, you have chosen a poor calling. You are a teacher and therefore should be sensitive to what is wrong, but apparently you are not. People expect the educated to be honest. One of the main objectives of education is to develop good character, in which honesty is the chief ingredient.'

" 'But,' she interposed, 'I am highly educated. I won a prize at college for excellence in Latin.'

" 'Then your Latin should have taught you *Fortunam quisque manere suam* (Everyone should live within his means: *Ovid*); but it didn't. You wanted to impress your husband with your wealth. Have you forgotten that Juvenal observed: *Intolerabilius nihil est quam femina dives* (Nothing is more unbearable than a woman with a full purse)? But I didn't send for you to tell you what some wise Romans learned through experience. I don't believe that experience can teach you. Horace spoke of a person who was *abnormis sapiens,* wise without instruction. I think you are unwise with instruction.'

" 'Why did you send for me?' Mrs. Thornton inquired.

" 'To tell you that charges will be preferred against you.'

"Before the hearing, Mrs. Thornton came to my office again. Gone was her air of bravado. All her bearing drooped with apology and regret.

" 'My husband,' she informed me, 'was brought up on charges by the Bar Association, in the matter of the bank loans. He is just as sorry about this mess as I am, and we are planning to start

life anew. We have learned the hard way. We have decided to go to Montevideo, where my uncle has lived for many years. He's doing very well there, and has promised to lend us a helping hand.'

" 'That's all very well,' I responded. 'I have no objection to your going to Montevideo, or to any other place. That is your affair. But charges have been preferred against you, which you will have to answer. Why do you come to me now?'

" 'I come to you,' she replied, 'because I am pregnant and wish to apply for a maternity leave. According to the Bylaws, you must grant me a maternity leave, regardless of the charges. Besides, what's the use of pressing charges, since I shall never return to the school system? The Bar Association has dropped its charges, and I think you should too.'

"In the light of the maternity leave, the need for which was checked, and of the fact that the Bar Association had dropped its charges, the truth of which was confirmed, the School Board dropped its charges against Mrs. Thornton, and the couple left for Montevideo.

"Two years later they were back. When she entered my office, I at once recognized Mrs. Thornton.

" 'I thought you were in Montevideo!'

" 'My husband and I didn't like it there. Those who have been long accustomed to the American way of life cannot easily acclimate themselves to any other place, especially to a God-forsaken place like Montevideo.'

" 'May I ask you why I am honored with your visit?'

" 'Of course.' She smiled. 'You will recall that I am on maternity leave. It expires next Monday. I am ready to return, and according to law I am entitled to my position.'

" 'You will never return,' I told her. 'I shall see to it that no child is again exposed to your evil influence. You tricked the Bar Association. You tricked me.'

"But legal arguments, Bylaws, nothing availed to keep her out.

She had a powerful friend, a judge, who rushed to her rescue at every critical moment. Mrs. Thornton was returned to the classroom, to shed her beneficent light upon innocent children entrusted to the schools by their parents, to grow in knowledge and virtue.

"I felt that justice had miscarried. I bided my time. And I was not long kept waiting. This time it was Mrs. Thornton's lawyer husband who came with a story to tell:

" 'You recall me; I am the husband of Helen Thornton. I married a devil. In the first place, I found out that she had lived as man and wife with a teacher. She got $5,000 out of him. She has had many boy friends, both before and after marriage. Among them is a judge who has a great deal of political influence.

"There isn't an honest bone in my wife's body. She gets more pleasure out of a crooked deal than a straight one. I must admit, to be honest with you, that I helped her in many a deal myself. Now, on account of her, I am being disbarred. She has left me and taken our son with her. He was born in Montevideo. That was a lovely place; excellent climate; easy to earn an honest dollar. But she wasn't interested in honest dollars; she preferred them quick and crooked. The law soon caught up with us. They are very strict down there. They don't stand for any nonsense, and they booted us out of the country.

" 'Let me come to the point. I know you want to get her, and I'll give you the facts. When she went to Georgia for the Spring vacation, to institute divorce proceedings, she left school at 1 o'clock instead of 3. Did she have permission to leave early? Why don't you look into this? I know she isn't fit to be a teacher and you will be doing the schools a favor if you throw her out. She's no good, just plain no good. She's nothing but a tramp and a crook. It's up to you to dismiss her.'

" 'That would please you, wouldn't it?' I replied. 'You want me to be the instrument of your revenge. Officially I must of course determine whether or not Mrs. Thornton broke regula-

tions. I regret that you, who participated in her shady actions, now bring her delinquencies to my attention.'

"I questioned Mrs. Thornton's principal. She had left without permission at 1 o'clock, distributing her children among other teachers, who assumed she was acting on orders. And she had collected her full month's pay, without deduction for the 2-hours absence.

"Her principal added: 'Mrs. Thornton has been a thorn in my side. She bears watching; she has a ready answer for infractions of rules, lateness, disregard of regulations and orders. Teachers avoid her; they are wary of her sharp tongue.' He suggested a mental examination, which, according to the provisions of the Bylaws, I thereupon ordered."

The following is from the psychiatrist's report: "Mrs. Thornton said that she was an excellent mixer. She stated complacently that she had had several affairs with men. Then she went into detail regarding her sexual experiences, with one person for a year, with another for 4 years. I asked her whether she thought this was good morals. She replied: 'I saw nothing wrong in this clean relationship, and I am not ashamed of it. It's a common practice. There is nothing wrong about it, where the relationship is clean.'

"I asked whether she accepted this in its fullest import and significance, regarding ideas and morals, and if she were at present of the same opinion. She answered: 'Undoubtedly, yes.' I then asked whether she would recommend such behavior, and she replied: 'Yes, if the relationship is clean.'" (The psychiatrist apparently did not ask Mrs. Thornton what she meant by "clean.")

"Her record shows that she spent 2 days in a hospital after attempted suicide with iodine. She explained: 'That was the time my husband put pressure on me to get money for him. He told me that if a wife really loved her husband, to prove it she would take iodine. He asked me to show him that I loved him. I took the

iodine, but it was not a lethal dose. The doctors at the hospital said it was light.'

"This act certainly shows emotional imbalance, weakness of judgment, and undue suggestibility.

"Mrs. Thornton then specified accusations made by her husband, of very foul and obscene sexual acts on her part . . . She is very suave, impressive, argumentative, dismissing the whole affair by claiming she is the victim of her husband's jealousy and wrath. Her husband, she said, accused her of sexual perversions with former paramours. She stated that her relationships with them were clean.

"Mrs. Thornton presents a very engaging appearance. She was logical and coherent. Her chief aim was to impress the examiner favorably in her behalf, employing what the examiner believes to be fantastic statements as a defense mechanism within her own moral code, using her husband as a scapegoat . . . She is well endowed intellectually, but she shows emotional imbalance, weakness of judgment, undue suggestibility, and certainly distorted concepts of a moral code . . . *Diagnosis:* Constitutional psychopathy, pronounced, with emotional instability. Undoubtedly, such a person should find no place in the pedagogic system of our city."

The psychiatrist further reported orally to the Superintendent that prior to his examination a prominent judge had telephoned him and requested that he give Mrs. Thornton a clean bill of health. "Never before in my 40 years as a psychiatrist has this type of pressure been exerted on me!" he exclaimed. "Even if this woman were mentally sound, which in my opinion she is not, she is by no proper standard fit to teach."

Another psychiatrist, present at Mrs. Thornton's interview with the Retirement Committee, also declared that she "shows the irresponsibility and emotional instability frequently found in the psychopathic personality . . . Because individuals with this

type of mental aberration are essentially very narcissistic and have little sense of moral responsibility, it is my belief that they should not be in the teaching profession. *Such personality lacks cannot help but affect pupils. Teachers are more than drillmasters; they also have a strong moral influence upon their pupils, affecting their spiritual and emotional growth as well as their intellectual development.* It is therefore my recommendation that Mrs. Thornton be placed upon the retirement list."

This recommendation was forwarded to the Retirement Board, whose determination, in accordance with the law, is final. There, time after time, political pressure secured postponement of its consideration. Finally another examination was ordered; a neurologist—not a psychiatrist—was assigned. Extracts from his report tell a different story:

"General behavior: attitude respectful; no obvious evidence of depression, elation, talkativeness, or apathy. No mannerisms. Cooperation excellent . . . Emotional reactions: No abnormality detected. Very stable . . . Insight and judgment good . . . I certainly see no evidence of abnormal trends in this person. She is sane and mentally competent."

The Superintendent ascertained that this questioning of Mrs. Thornton had been carried on in the presence of her attorney and of a friend, a well-known judge, who had high words of praise for Mrs. Thornton. Suspecting that the doctor had been "reached," the Superintendent requested another examination. Another psychiatrist was then chosen. The Superintendent notes that he has no positive evidence as to whether this man was also "reached." This doctor presented a very long report, from which the following is quoted:

"I applied the material elicited by me, and the material I had received from the School Board, to the accepted classification of constitutional psychopathic states, with the following results:

"1. I could find no basis in fact, in her entire history, for considering her as being in the group of inadequate personality.

She did not impress me as leading, or as having led, a life that was planless, improvident, or shiftless, or displaying no initiative.

"2. A review of the reports at my disposal, plus my own observations, did not yield a scintilla of evidence to point in the direction of emotional instability. There is certainly no evidence that she was subject to attacks of extreme anger or rage; or that she passed easily from happiness to the depths of despair; or from extreme selfishness to self-sacrifice. Then again, the distance or the depths to which a wife will go, in order to please a husband, cannot be measured by any arbitrary rule or method and certainly, on the face of it, does not point to weakness of judgment or emotional imbalance."

(The Superintendent observed that such words as "not a scintilla" and "certainly" quite clearly, and the whole tone of this report more subtly, resemble less the objective findings of an impersonal investigator than the brief of an attorney pleading for his client.)

"3. The grouping known as criminalism is manifestly inapplicable, because it is synonymous with moral imbecility and 'innate' criminalism, which manifests itself, at an early age, in unusual cruelty, unkindness, brutality, coming into conflict with the environment or the police, and immunity to the effects of punishment.

"4. The tendency to nomadism is quite prevalent in so-called normal people. Those who have the tendency to an 'abnormal' degree show a lack of social adjustment that soon leads to the life of a hobo or tramp.

"5. The basic elements of the paranoid type of personality are suspicion and conceit, and the persons so affected have a penchant for the mystical and the bizarre, and they are treacherous. Neither the voluminous reports at my disposal, nor my own observations and findings, contain anything of a nature that would group Mrs. Thornton in classification 3, 4 or 5.

"6. As to sexual psychopathies, there isn't an iota of evidence

that points to nymphomania, frigidity, fetichism, sadism, masochism, bestiality, or lesbianism. As to her alleged extramarital relationships, being strictly objective I can neither condemn nor condone them, and I do not and never have advocated sexual relationships in the unmarried, particularly the females. But I do know of women in sacred and profane history who have 'crossed the Rubicon' in that regard and who have left, nevertheless, eternal footprints on the sands of time, for the welfare and betterment of the human race. I am also aware of the fact that sexual motives play a very important role in human conduct, and I can therefore understand that a broken home (as was Mrs. Thornton's), comparative poverty, the tension of fear that goes with poverty, the ensuing lack of security, the literary association which the ardent advocates of sex emancipation superimposed upon social and economic insecurity brought about by the post-war period, sowed the seeds of revolt that manifested themselves in lowered sexual standards, and in the formation of new values. I cannot, by the farthest stretch of the imagination, believe that there are persons who would relegate to the leprous scrap-heap girls who in the throes of youth and inexperience had partaken of the 'forbidden' tree; or who believe that a girl who had 'done' so, about 20-odd years ago, and who had not 'done' so subsequently, should find no place in the pedagogic system of our City schools. I know and have known professional women of every variety, who have become brilliant and steadfast educators, or outstanding, decent, honorable, and God-fearing doctors, lawyers, dentists and librarians, and mothers who espouse everything that is noble and honorable—all of whom have 'tasted' of the forbidden fruit, prior to matrimony. We need only refer to Dr. Katherine B. Davis, who under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation collected a mass of data regarding the marital and premarital state of women, to learn something of premarital sexuality among college women. I am not offering this paper as a criterion, or as an advocate of that which it discloses; but I do

maintain that any girl who was temporarily caught in the maelstrom is not, of necessity, a constitutional psychopath and emotionally unstable. I do not believe that Mrs. Thornton's sex life with her husband should be disclosed, because it cannot aid us in any way in our quest, and I am of the considered opinion that discussing it is unnecessary, undesirable, and improper.

"The integrity of the functional growth of personality is expressed in varied and diversified ways, so that reactions of liberation or restraint in the adolescent or the young adult, if judged by the hard and fast rules of 'the Medes and the Persians,' would bid fair to run counter to the true interpretation of the basic problem. It is a strange commentary that while we know so much about personality we have, as yet, no absolutely clear and precise concept of the fundamental etiology underlying the different developmental types of personality; and many, therefore, either do not understand or else misinterpret the effect of stress, strain, feelings of insecurity upon the behavior, and ascribe such conduct to being the expression of psychically abnormal maladjustment. It is said of Nathaniel Hawthorne that he was so shy and self-conscious that, whenever he saw visitors approaching, he ran out of the house to avoid having conversation with them . . .

"Based upon all of the data noted above, it is my opinion that Mrs. Thornton:

"1. is sane and mentally competent.

"2. is not incapacitated for the performance of her work as a school teacher.

"3. is not a Constitutional Psychopathic Personality with Emotional Instability."

Hypnotized by the psychiatric flow of eloquence, the neat instancing of an American literary figure, or moved by the ardent plea for young adults caught in the maelstrom, for girls "who in the throes of youth and inexperience had partaken of the forbidden tree . . . about 20-odd years ago and not subsequently"—the Retirement Board overlooked the fact that Mrs. Thornton's

tasting of that tree had been frequent and continuous to the present. They overlooked other matters too—such as the well-being of the children—and, refusing to throw Mrs. Thornton on the "leprous scrap-heap," ordered her returned to the classroom.

The Superintendent lamented that the final word to the School Board came from a psychiatrist "who does not think that those entrusted with the education of children must be of high moral character and emotionally among the more stable members of the community." He commented further: "It is to be hoped that sooner or later our virtuous heroine will get herself embroiled in difficulties from which she will not be able to extricate herself. Youth is not eternal, nor are judges immortal."

Mrs. Thornton is teaching still.

A school system was again thwarted in the case of Miss Louise T. Atwood, 68, who for 30 years had been principal of an elementary school in a large midwestern city. "Miss Atwood's head, set on a stumpy trunk, seemed too small for her body, her beady eyes too small for her fat jowls. She gave the impression of a vulgar, unlettered woman, as indeed she was. Those who knew her wondered how she had ever passed the searching test for principal and how she had managed to secure a Ph.D. degree."

Miss Atwood had the reputation of being a fraud, a cheat. It had been rumored that she was the mistress of the custodian of the school of which she was principal; that coal purchased to heat the schoolhouse somehow managed to get into the bins of her home; that she had been the mistress of a school official who had died suddenly in his mountain cabin, from which her belongings had been discreetly returned to her. None of these rumors rose to the status of a charge, and for 30 years there was no investigation of her administration.

Then the Superintendent learned that a Miss Madeleine Auer had paid Miss Atwood $300 for a transfer to Miss Atwood's school, a pleasant school where she was promised an easy time if she

would continue to "co-operate" with the principal. The Superintendent questioned Miss Auer, who is discussed earlier in this book (Chapter 16). Miss Auer gave the Superintendent other names, and the investigation was begun. The following further facts were unearthed:

1. For years, Miss Atwood had taken the monthly salary check of Miss Quinn, a mentally disturbed teacher in her school. The sum appropriated amounted to a little over $18,000. Miss Atwood doled out small sums to Miss Quinn, threatening her with dismissal and a mental institution if she talked.

2. Miss Milano, a substitute teacher, asked Miss Atwood to certify that she was regularly employed, so that she could secure a bank loan of $750. Miss Atwood told her to ask for $1,000; for $250 she would see that there was a steady job. This was done—but a regular teacher was assigned to the vacancy the next month. The jobless Miss Milano told her father, who got in touch with a local politician, Mr. Andrino. A few days later, Mr. Andrino went to Miss Atwood's office, told her he needed $100, and if she didn't give it to him, he'd take the Milano story to the School Board. Two weeks later, he was there for another $100. Miss Atwood sent for a teacher she knew would have the sum, and "borrowed" $100 which she gave to Mr. Andrino. He said: "Next time, don't keep me waiting!" When he came again, Miss Atwood wept, and pleaded financial distress. Mr. Andrino said he would stop if Miss Atwood paid Miss Milano the $250 with 6% interest. Miss Atwood paid the sum in 10 monthly installments.

3. Mr. Metzger, a painter, was commissioned by Miss Atwood to paint, from a daguerreotype, a portrait of her grandfather who she said had been a "naval admiral" with Nelson at Trafalgar. At her home, she showed him a vase "given to my great grandmother by Queen Victoria," and a dagger with which her father's grandfather had saved Wellington's life at Waterloo. Mr. Metzger was deeply impressed with Miss Atwood's noble antecedents, until he noticed discrepancies and variations in her talks. Her

grandfather, it seemed, had served under Nelson, Farragut, and John Paul Jones. The donor of the vase, though always a queen, was a different queen at different tellings of the story. And one day, when Mr. Metzger was politely admiring the vase, she told him he could have it for $50, although it had cost her $250.

When Mr. Metzger had completed the portrait, Miss Atwood declared that she did not like it, and refused to pay. He threatened suit, but finally rested content with $10 plus the ancestral vase. To this day, Miss Atwood shows visitors the portrait of her ancestor the Admiral, painted in the eighteenth century by the famous court painter Metzger.

4. One summer Miss Atwood, with three of her teachers, started out for a cross-country trip in the automobile of one of the teachers, Miss Althaus. They were to share expenses, settling accounts weekly. At the end of the first week, Miss Atwood said she had no money with her, but would telegraph for some to the school custodian, to whom she had given her summer check (2-months pay) to deposit. Not only did she produce no funds all summer, but the three teachers, in addition to covering her trip expenses, provided her with pocket money. Back at school, she blithely told them she had enjoyed the trip immensely, and suggested that for the next summer they should think of Europe.

5. Miss Roberts and Miss Whiteside worked in Miss Atwood's school on a day-to-day substitute basis. Miss Atwood told them that she had a friend, a Countess, who manufactured a 'marvelous' facial cream with a secret formula. At a faculty conference, Miss Atwood extolled the virtues of this cream, and assigned the two substitutes to sell it, at a dollar a jar. After 2 weeks of brisk sales Miss Whiteside told the principal she was a teacher, not a cosmetics salesgirl; anyway, the cream was no good. Miss Atwood said "Thank you!"—and Miss Whiteside taught no more in her school. Miss Roberts continued to sell 10 jars a week. When the investigation reached her, she had at home 280 jars of the Countess's cream. She stated that it was worth $10 a week to her, to hold a steady job.

6. At the Central Market, Miss Atwood secured special prices on hams, chickens, eggs, meats, vegetables, and canned goods, stating that she was buying for the school lunchroom and for an orphan asylum. She placed Miss Durfee, a teacher on temporary license, in charge of her "Bargain Counter," which was patronized by all the teachers who wanted to remain in the good graces of their principal. She told the faculty that the proceeds were to be used to send poor children to a summer camp. No one ever found a child thus sent to camp. According to Miss Durfee, the "Bargain Counter" reaped a profit of over $45 a week, and Miss Atwood's kitchen was always well supplied.

Miss Atwood, summoned before the Superintendent, was confronted with these declarations. She stoutly maintained her innocence: "I'll prove that all of these charges are false, completely and absolutely false."

The next day, Miss Louise T. Atwood retired.

The School Board, attempting to prosecute Miss Atwood, was instructed by the court that a retired teacher is beyond the jurisdiction of the Board. Miss Atwood, living in her beautiful home in the suburbs, now dabbles in real estate.

Two psychiatrists with whom the case was discussed suggested that Miss Atwood was probably schizophrenic. They inquired: "Would it not be well to have candidates, at least for the higher licenses, undergo psychiatric and psychological tests?"

Miss Doris Broadhead's story is a good one to ponder, for her friends declare that, if she had been checked and treated early in her career, she might have been saved for a long and useful life of excellent service. In fact, throughout her 23 years of Satisfactory teaching, Miss Broadhead enjoyed an unblemished reputation for work in the classroom. She was a tall, well-groomed, attractive woman; the children and their parents liked her.

Miss Broadhead came to official attention at the age of 44, when Northwest Airlines complained to the School Board that she had given them two checks drawn on a bank at which she was

not a depositor. She had agreed to pay the money in three monthly installments, but paid only one. Called by the Superintendent, Miss Broadhead spoke as though this were a unique and unfortunate lapse, which she would clear forthwith.

Two weeks later, an officer of the Hotel Credit Association telephoned, saying that a teacher, Doris Broadhead, had cashed 7 checks in two hotels, for a total of $450—drawn on a bank where she was no longer a depositor.

This time the Superintendent was more thorough in his questioning. He sent Miss Broadhead home to figure out her debts. The next day she brought in a list of approximately $3,500. She explained that she and her mother had lived with a wealthy and generous uncle, whose fortune they had expected to inherit. At the age of 82, he surprised them by marrying a 38-year-old woman. This naturally cut off their expectations. Miss Broadhead and her mother had to secure an apartment of their own. She was used to good things, she said.

Miss Broadhead failed to keep two appointments with the psychiatrist. When she finally appeared for the interview she informed the psychiatrist that she had recently requested transfer from an administrative assignment back to the classroom, preparatory to taking an examination for a principalship. She spoke easily and freely—except that, on the subject of her debts and bad checks, "she displayed a not-too-subtle undercurrent of semi-frankness alternating with semi-evasiveness." Essentially, she made the psychiatrist feel that "for about 10 years Miss Broadhead has been borrowing from Peter to pay Paul, but somehow managed to get her debts paid—even though the paying off of one debt meant incurring another. She emphasized that it was only late last year that she began to get into debt completely beyond her usual precarious depths."

Her life was further complicated by an engagement that fell through. A Catholic, Miss Broadhead met and fell in love with a divorced Protestant. Her mother had died; she was alone, and

his companionship seemed to fill her life again. The marriage date was set. Miss Broadhead bought an expensive dress at an exclusive shop—without enough money to cover her check. "I knew that in a day or two I'd get my next pay check. So I told myself the pay check would be deposited in time. Somehow, it never happened that way."

When Miss Broadhead went to her priest, she found that the Church refused to marry her to a divorced man and a Protestant. She then told her fiancé she was putting him out of her life. "I was greatly disturbed about it, but I tried to pretend to myself it was not important . . . Nobody, except one friend, knew I had been thinking of getting married. And nobody would have known if the lawyer from Cartier had not come to the School Board with the unpaid bill for the engraved announcement of the wedding."

Miss Broadhead admitted that it was difficult for her to descend from the high level of her previously gratified expensive tastes and keep her expenditures within the realistic bounds of her now limited income. She seemed eager, however, at this interview, to clear off her debts, regain a financial balance, keep within the range of her own income, and continue her work at school.

The psychiatrist found excuse for her behavior, beyond the changes wrought by her rich uncle's marriage and her own broken match. Miss Broadhead was beginning to experience menopause. At such a time, he stated, "it is not uncommon to encounter a female patient whose attitudes, actions, feelings, emotional tone, and previous stable, good judgment undergo considerable alteration. Sometimes an actual psychosis results; at other times a severe psychoneurotic syndrome evolves; other women may display so-called character aberrations. Almost any kind of deviant pattern may be displayed, and to almost any degree, as the woman, in her middle years, undergoes what is best termed psychological menopause. This may precede, accompany, or follow the actual physiological menopause. Overt and

consciously recognized sexual libido is often heightened; in some women, this type of libido remains unrecognized for what it actually is, but peculiar behavior patterns result . . .

"I would handle this woman and her practical financial problems in a direct manner. That is, put her back to work, permit her to pay off her debts with scheduled regularity, and give her the assurance that you feel the whole thing has happened because of emotional illness. Actually, I think she needs psychiatric therapy, for she certainly falls far short of appreciating what has happened to her . . . If she proves by trial that she can function efficiently in her job as a teacher, she should be permitted to remain in the classroom. Should this not prove to be the case, a return to her administrative work should be considered."

Miss Broadhead agreed to all this. Together with the Superintendent, she set up a schedule for paying off her debts; her various creditors were satisfied with the arrangements.

Four days later, a complaint came to the School Board that Miss Broadhead had paid $92.65 for a dress—with a check on a bank where she had no account. Two weeks later, she bought two hats for $165—with a bad check. The Superintendent called her, and notified her that he was preferring charges against her. In the meantime, more complaints were registered:

She had given a bad check for $20.50 to a candy-store proprietor.

She had paid $60 for a purse and a pair of shoes, with a bad check.

Then, while she was in a luggage shop, its owner telephoned to the School Board to find out whether she was a teacher. She had given him an $82.50 check for a bag; he had called up the bank and been told she had no account.

"Is she really a teacher?"

"Yes," said the Superintendent. "She is a teacher. But she is mentally ill and is not responsible for her acts. As an intelligent man, you will understand."

"Oh, yes, of course, sure! She is a mashooganeh! Yes. I'm sorry.

You should excuse me. How should I know she is a mashooganeh teacher? But she's not so mashoogah. She picked out the most expensive bag in the shop."

After her retirement, at the urging of friends, Doris Broadhead voluntarily applied for admission to a mental hospital.

The Superintendent had meanwhile asked all the principals under whom Miss Broadhead had served to report on the character of her service. Her teaching record was uniformly excellent. But there now came forth stories of financial and social problems that went back at least 20 years. Miss Broadhead, according to the files of the various schools:

1. Had borrowed sums of money from many of her fellow teachers, who experienced great difficulty in securing repayment;

2. Had borrowed money to give "swanky" parties at hotels;

3. Had been evicted from an apartment for non-payment of rent;

4. Had constantly talked of suitors and men who danced attendance upon her, and had dressed beyond her means to impress her colleagues (and these perhaps imaginary male friends);

5. Had stated that many of her expensive accessories, as well as hats, shoes, and even suits, were gifts of these admirers.

In spite of all these items on her record, at 4 different schools under 6 principals, none of Miss Broadhead's supervisors had felt that her conduct was in any way abnormal, or that she was in need of psychiatric care. Perhaps, if she had received proper treatment, or even sympathetic and understanding guidance, 20 years before, Doris Broadhead's life might have progressed along a rewarding pattern of continuing excellent service. Until she was retired, her value in the classroom had never been questioned.

It may be felt that dishonesty involves a deliberate antisocial activity, whereas kleptomania is more of a compulsion, a neurotic action arising from an unconscious need of self-defense or self-assertion. We tend therefore to condemn a thief and to pity a

kleptomaniac. Behind the theft or other dishonesty, however, there is a similar, though less obviously compulsive, personality disorder, sprung from insecurity or anger—desire for revenge on an individual or on society—or from other basic drives.

The story of Hildegard Reiner, although, like Miss Broadhead's, it involves an aberration extending over 20 years, has a happier conclusion. Mrs. Reiner, at 45, had been a Satisfactory elementary school teacher in Pennsylvania for 22 years. She was married, and had two children, the elder 17. She came to official attention on a complaint of an officer of the Associated Stores Mutual Protection Association. Accompanying the complaint was a signed statement by Mrs. Reiner, admitting many acts of shoplifting, in four department stores.

Her first theft, of about $16 worth of goods, occurred in 1939. In 1945, 1947, and 1950, she was apprehended, on each occasion in a different store where she gave a different name. She was released on returning the articles. She stated that she went shoplifting some ten to twelve Saturdays a year, and calculated that in the 5 years after her arrest she had stolen about $850 worth of merchandise.

When the Superintendent questioned her, Mrs. Reiner sobbed, "I don't know why I did it. I can't help myself . . . I didn't mean to do it; I'll never do it again! . . . If my husband finds out . . . I have disgraced my children."

But she came to the psychiatrist with a husband who, once she had told him, proved fully sympathetic and eager to help.

The psychiatrist's report declares: "On the occasion of her first shoplifting episode, in 1939, Mrs. Reiner consulted a physician. He merely told her to keep away from large department stores and to behave herself. During her major period, including the times when she was apprehended, she was not imbued with any sense of potential social jeopardy and ostracism. For the past 4 years, however, she has after each experience felt great remorse and

shame. She wanted to talk with someone about it, especially to her husband, but she feared his reaction. Or to a psychiatrist, but she knew none and was afraid to attract attention and questioning by an inquiry. So she did nothing . . .

"I explained to Mr. and Mrs. Reiner," the psychiatrist continued, "that her shoplifting of objects that admittedly had no value to her was a neurotically determined compulsive activity, and that mere moralistic resolve on her part not to do it again, while a laudable attitude, was totally insufficient to overcome an uncontrollable neurotic compulsion . . . I then said that if she would place herself under immediate treatment, I felt that there was no reason to recommend that she discontinue teaching, inasmuch as continuing to teach would help her to sustain her morale.

"*Clinical opinion:* Mrs. Reiner, apparently a devoted parent, faithful wife, and conscientious teacher, has been afflicted for many years with a deep-seated neurosis of which, at present, kleptomanic activity appears to be the chief or only symptom. According to Fenichel, 'Kleptomania means in principle to take possession of things that give the power to fight supposed dangers, especially . . . supposed dangers of loss of esteem or affection.' There are likewise certain sexual implications associated with kleptomanic activity which at the moment have no place in this discussion.

"*Recommendation:* 1. Insist upon her undertaking psychotherapy with a recognized and qualified psychiatrist.

"2. Permit her to continue teaching unless (a) she is advised to stop by her psychotherapist, or (b) her level of teaching deteriorates to an unacceptable level.

"She is not to be considered dangerous to herself or others, nor is she an antisocial or immoral influence upon her pupils."

A minority of the Retirement Committee voted that charges of conduct unbecoming a teacher be preferred against Mrs. Reiner. The majority voted that she be permitted to continue

teaching, on two conditions: (1) That she place herself under psychiatric care, and (2) That she resign at once after any further shoplifting episode.

Mrs. Reiner went back to the classroom. About a month later, the Superintendent received a routine questionnaire; Mrs. Reiner had given his name at a department store where she wished to open an account. He at once sent for Mrs. Reiner. She explained: "You treated me so kindly and so fairly that I wanted to open an account at a store from which I have never stolen anything, to show you I can go straight."

Mrs. Reiner's psychiatrist, to whom she told this story, telephoned the Superintendent, requesting more time "to adjust" the patient. In the 3 years that have since gone by, there have been no complaints from department stores, the psychiatric reports have been satisfactory, and the school reports indicate that principal, parents, and children are well pleased with Mrs. Reiner's work.

The redemption of Mrs. Reiner must not lead us happily to overlook less agreeable concerns. Despite the loose attitude toward money that led to Doris Broadhead's dismissal, it was noted that until she was retired, her value in the classroom had never been questioned. Does this mean she was having no harmful effect upon the children? Is the sole criterion of a teacher's worth the amount of subject matter she can pack into her pupils' heads?

One psychiatrist, urging but unable to effect the dismissal of Mrs. Thornton, declared, as has been observed: "Teachers are not drillmasters; they also have a strong moral effect upon their pupils, affecting their spiritual and emotional growth as well as their intellectual development." The question thereupon rises: Can a teacher slough her personal weaknesses, her own moral lapses and lax attitudes, and come to the classroom a tower of spiritual strength? Or will her point of view toward life inevitably though unwittingly come through to the children? There are countless moments in class discussion and activity that give play

for ethical attitudes; willy-nilly does the truth of the teacher betray itself to the class? How long, and how well, can a teacher play Tartuffe?

Children have quick powers of discernment. Even without intellectual recognition they sense and are influenced by a pattern of behavior, or an attitude. Their conduct is readily patterned after that of their mentor. This is especially true if the teacher is a person the child likes and admires. And it may be that a teacher with lax moral standards in her private life is in the classroom a jolly, easy-going worker who "kids" the children into good deportment, while they enjoy the little freedoms of self-expression modern education and the easy-virtued teacher allow, and no one is there to tell them that they are slipping into an acceptance of conduct that is slurring their perception of the standards of ethical action. Even among adults, "What of it?" becomes an easy shrugging off of such concerns. Perhaps parents and even supervisors are too little alarmed at this indirect induction of lower standards. So long as a teacher's results are good—which means that *my* child, and most of the others, pass—we may be asked, what concern is it of ours how the teacher behaves outside of school? So long, of course, as her conduct is not flaunted in open scandal, is not the teacher, like the rest of the public, entitled to freedom from prying?

She is—if her private attitudes do not affect her public charges, the children of the country. Those persons who feel that the teacher cannot thus be cut in two, that she continues to be in the classroom the sort of person she is outside, regard with sober concern the lack of attention paid to a teacher's character throughout her career. Further fruit of this will be pointed out in the following chapter.

20

Sexual Deviation and Excess

THE PROBLEMS of sexual activity, or of sexual proclivity, are perhaps most complicated and confusing. The sex impulse is natural and almost universal; the comparatively rare instances of its lack, of sexual frigidity, are pathological. But within the range of the expressions given to that impulse, what is normal, and what abnormal? Practices that some denounce as dangerous, or at least immoral deviations are by others declared quite acceptable.

Verbal activity and pictorial display of obscenity and pornography are also relative matters. Everyone joins in condemning them, but no one succeeds in defining them. Many books once barred from the mails, such as Joyce's *Ulysses* and Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* are now to be found in paperback editions. What one community confiscates, another displays on its bookshelves.

Certainly more persons enjoy "smutty jokes" than have ever paused to weigh their consequences. Are they a danger; do they insidiously sap the moral sense? Or are they, as the Greeks deemed the theater, a purgation? Many that would frown at the telling of a risqué story in mixed company, or when young folk are present, feel free to enjoy such a tale or joke in a homogeneous group. There, a person who objected or turned away would be deemed the "abnormal" one. We naturally do not wish our children to grow up to be hypocrites or prudes; but equally we do not wish them to become prurient or lewd. The reader should

ponder to what degree his own attitude echoes or reflects his background.

When deeds, not words, are examined, it must be kept in mind that sexual deviation, like fever, may have a multitude of causes. So far as the deviant teacher is concerned, there should be diagnostic analysis to determine whether treatment is recommended. For the children whom that teacher is supposed to be guiding, more immediate action may seem desirable. It is clear that certain deviations or perversions are condemned by the majority of citizens. Even here, however, there are degrees and shadings that will prove troublesome to a conscientious supervisor.

There may be a perverse tendency in a teacher, revealed perhaps in a Rorschach or other psychological test, that has never been given active or overt expression. Shall such a person be permitted to teach? To what extent can one rely upon the tests? And if the impulse or desire is admitted, but suppressed by deliberate and conscious exercise of the will, is there not the danger that, some day, there may be an invitation extended to a susceptible child to participate in the overt act? Is it fair to such a teacher to force retirement? Is it fair to the children to wait, not for the deed, but until parent or school official becomes aware of such a deed?

An 18-year-old homosexual in a state mental institution told how he had been initiated, 3 years before, by his summer-camp counselor, who in winter was an apparently well-behaved teacher.

There may be some teachers in whom the deviation has found expression, but perhaps long ago with no recent repetition, or perhaps with others of the teacher's own age, with no indication of desire to indulge in it with children, and no open scandal. Shall such persons, admitting their deeds to a doctor, or otherwise coming to some official's attention, be forced to resign?

What about those who do not practice the named perversions, but indulge in extramarital relationships? Are they competent teachers so long as their actions have not burst into public scan-

dal, nor spread in spicy gossip through the school or the neighborhood? Does their conduct in the sexual realm render them unfit to strengthen the moral fiber of their pupils? Or is sex irrelevant? Has their sex life a definite, a traceable and harmful effect upon other aspects of their being? Or is it of no concern pedagogically, so long as it does not sexually involve the children?

What is the attitude at the college level? Professor Leo C. May in 1958 invited a prostitute to address his class in criminology at Oklahoma State University. When a newspaper story brought this to public attention, the Governor sent a wire to the University President, suggesting that the University no longer needed the Professor's services. The President, however, pointed out that this was a suggestion, not a demand, and the unperturbed Professor declared that on his schedule he also had a pickpocket.

And in 1960 Biology Professor Leo Koch of the University of Illinois declared that the pre-marital intercourse of mature students was not reprehensible. Dismissed from his own University, the Professor was a welcomed lecturer at other colleges, on the subject of "Freedom and Taboo in America." He is being hailed by the young, apparently, as an apostle of the "New Freedom." "Taboo or not taboo, that is his question," said one college journal editorial.

At the elementary and the high-school levels, such confrontations of pupils and persons who challenge society's norms are little likely to be arranged. But what if the challenge faces the children every day, within the private life of the teacher?

Such questions, as to the dangers implicit in the character of a sexual offender, may have been pressed by our spiritual guides, but they have not been probed by our psychologists. They have, indeed, seldom been raised at all, save as subjects for sabbath sermons, comfortably left to the admonitory pulpit and the somnolent pew. They call for study. The entire role of sex, including the sex education of the young, and the influence on the young of urgent or deviant sex impulses in a teacher, needs fuller exami-

nation. Such examination is outside the scope of this book. Until it is made, and knowledge in the matter is acquired, the treatment of sexually deviant or defiant teachers remains a question of community mores, of the standards of the locality, or indeed of the individual who happens to be in charge. Only a few such cases as have impinged upon the schools and been brought to official attention can be examined here.

It should perhaps first be noted that cases of moral turpitude involving teachers with children rarely appear in the columns of newspapers. The police cooperate in keeping them quiet except when there is a particularly flagrant violation of decency and public morals. There are several reasons for such silence.

There is, first, the well-being and the reputation of the school system to preserve. The sexual misbehavior of one teacher, publicized, would lead many persons to infer that there must be many stories that do not come to light. Everyone who has had unhappy experiences in his school days, who perhaps carries a grudge against a single teacher—far outweighing in his mind the memory of many excellent and friendly instructors—will seize with delight upon the scandal, and smear its ugliness across the entire system. Everyone knows how, after a single case of publicized police dishonesty, cynical citizens declare that the whole force is corrupt. So would it be with teachers.

After such a publicized sexual episode, furthermore, suspicious and quick-tempered parents would begin to worry about sending their child to a public school. Under questioning at home, bewildered children will present or elaborate upon innocent acts, for alarmed misinterpretation. A few wholly unrepresentative scandals may destroy the influence and reputation of the schools for building upright and properly directed children.

Beyond this, sexual deviations involving children are, as a matter of public policy, kept from public presentation. Some states have laws forbidding the public naming of minors involved in sexual offenses. Even if the names are not mentioned

in the press, the appearance of children in court, as culprits or as witnesses, will become known to schoolmates and neighbors. The very calling upon a child to testify in such matters, not to mention his awareness that the community knows of his involvement, may have damaging effects upon his personality. Because of such considerations, guilty teachers have been permitted to retire, instead of being summoned for court prosecution and consequent public disgrace that would also besmirch the children.

There are sexual cases in the schools in which no children seem to have been involved. Mrs. Hulda Braut, for example, came to attention through a long complaint written by a fellow teacher, Mrs. Lola Spence. Mrs. Spence was a Satisfactory teacher of Art, aged 32; Mrs. Braut, aged 40, taught the same pupils their academic subjects. We give extracts from the 32-page typewritten statement of Lola Spence, charging Hulda Braut with homosexuality.

"At the first meeting of teachers in the fall, I was introduced to Mrs. Braut by my supervisor. The following evening she phoned me, and I invited her to my home. She impressed my other guests with her charming manner and kept them entertained with her conversation throughout the evening. For the next 2 weeks, Hulda phoned me every evening, apparently to discuss our pupils . . .

"On October 2, Hulda left school with me. As we sat at the station waiting for the train, she embraced me, much to my discomfort, and no matter how many times I tried to draw away, she clenched my right arm and held my hand to her heart. She kept repeating how very much I meant to her and when she left, she pressed me tightly to her and smothered me with a kiss on the mouth.

"Hulda pleaded with me to come over and have tea with her the next Sunday. Her apartment has three rooms, with two couches in each room, and many religious pictures. Prominent was a large sculptured wooden head which she told me her

friend Jean had removed from the wall of a private chapel in France. She went into a long and intimate story of her devoted friend Jean, with whom she had lived for 5 years, until a year ago when Jean died. Hulda was wearing a silk robe, which she now pressed about her, saying that it was Jean's robe and that she wore it close to her body because she enjoyed knowing that Jean had worn it close to her body.

"Hulda's dog, Sandy, jumped restlessly about from one piece of furniture to another. When Hulda sat down, Sandy put his front paws on her knees and tried to nuzzle in her lap. She picked him up and covered him with kisses.

"Hulda offered to come over any night and pose for me. I told her that I painted only in the daytime. She brought in the tea; but instead of serving it, came over to the couch and pulled me down alongside her. She embraced me forcibly while I struggled to free myself. She held my hands and kissed me on the mouth, forehead, hair, eyes, the back of my ears, and even the nape of my neck. All the time she was squeezing me to her, with one hand squeezing my breast. I pretended I had to go to the bathroom, and she released me . . .

"On Sunday night, October 23, Hulda 'phoned me to say she had just returned from the hospital, where she had been taken after fainting the night before. She begged me to come over. When I arrived, she got out of bed to embrace me. She was wearing a very short and filmy nightgown. She pulled me to the bed, to embrace me and to kiss me. She was panting heavily, was very flushed, and had a peculiar intent, almost glazed look in her eyes. I finally broke away and told her I would leave if she did not take the rest she needed.

"She then lay on the bed, only half covered by her gown, and began to speak to me in detail of her past: 'My husband was abnormal sexually. He marked on the calendar the dates when we were to have sex relations. He was a beast—he made me do things —some day I will tell you all the details. My mother always took

sides with my husband. She never had any regard for me. When I was a school girl she once left me with a Flemish woman and her daughter who was about my age, 15. The girl tried to do things to me; I complained to her mother. The mother then said I should sleep with her—and she did the same thing. I wrote to my mother, who came at once; but she spoke to the woman first, then she called me "bad" and packed my things and took me home. When I married, my mother told my husband he was never to leave me alone with a woman. I never knew she had spoken to him until he used it at the divorce trial to secure the custody of the children.'

"At the divorce trial, Mrs. Braut went on, her own daughter accused her of incest; the details were so scabrous that the judge adjourned the trial to his private chambers. Mrs. Braut told me she was so horrified that she spoke to a psychiatrist she knew; they came to the conclusion that the girl had been practicing homosexuality with a camp counselor the summer before, and had transferred her guilt to her mother.

"Mrs. Braut lifted up her short nightgown and said to me: 'This was Jean's. I love to wear it.' She then spoke of girls who kept candles in their purses and used them. She told of a girl she knew who had her dog taken away from her because she used it.

"I shuddered and told her that I knew no such people. She said that her husband tried to accuse her of having affairs with other women, but at the trial he could only give the names of women who were dead. At 3:15 A.M. I finally left in utter disgust. She begged me to phone her as soon as I arrived home. I told her the phone calls were running to quite an expense, and I would ring once as a signal that I was all right; she should not pick up the receiver. She did pick it up, and persisted in talking until after 4:30 . . .

"On Friday, November 11, I spent the day with my sister and her husband. They had invited Hulda over for dinner. After dinner we sat in the dark, watching television. Hulda sat on the

couch beside me. She took my hand, and then pressed her hand at the top of my legs. I kept getting up, pretending I wanted a drink, etc., but when I came back she took my hand, pressed it to her breast, and began rubbing me again. My brother-in-law must have noticed something, because that week-end he asked a friend, a doctor, to enlighten my sister and me on the subject of homosexuality. After listening to him, I told Mrs. Braut she was a Lesbian and she should keep away from me. Since then, she has been talking to our fellow teachers, accusing me of making advances to her, threatening to sue me for libel and to have my license revoked. That is why I am reporting the matter."

Enclosed with this 32-page letter of detailed accusations were four letters and two poems Lola said Hulda had sent her; they were amorous but vague. Also enclosed was a letter from Hulda to Lola's brother-in-law, Mr. Edward Waterman, of which this is a small section:

"Dear Ed . . . I do not know the cause of Lola's illness . . . However, I cannot tolerate having myself brought into the picture, accused of monstrosities and made the target of her emotional instability . . . If you judge objectively you will agree with me that Lola flies off the handle very easily and that, when she does, she loses all perspective and judgment."

On the basis of this material, and a talk with Lola Spence, the Superintendent asked Hulda Braut to visit the school psychiatrist. She appeared "neatly dressed in a tailored suit and blouse and wore a beret-style hat. She was thoroughly co-operative on a verbal level, and spoke relevantly and coherently throughout the interview. There was no flight of ideas, rambling, nor other features associated with a hypomanic syndrome . . . She appeared to be a very intelligent person; she displayed a fairly complete awareness of the situation that required having her talk with a psychiatrist . . . I distinguish between insight and awareness: the latter, which she has in full measure, concerns the embarrassing charges leveled at her, and she is appropriately dismayed

by the threat to her future and to her school status. Insight is that self-knowledge which stems from a correct subjective dynamic appraisal of one's behavior, conversation and attitudes which have directly influenced the development of a given situation. It is this aspect of the alleged history about which I am not at all satisfied, i.e., that Mrs. Braut possesses insight.

"I was impressed that Mrs. Braut categorically denied the charges of overt homosexual approaches to the women involved. She denied flatly that she is now or ever has been voluntarily a participant or instigator of Lesbian relationships on a genital or near-genital level. 'I am a devout Catholic. To do that kind of thing would be a mortal sin. As far as I know, I have never committed a mortal sin.'

". . . The Rorschach test indicated that Mrs. Braut was a cold, rigid, defensive personality, characterized psychosexually by a prominent homosexual component. This latter finding, however, offered no basis upon which to conclude unequivocally that her homosexual component generated overt Lesbian behavior toward or with other women. The Minnesota Multiphasic Test revealed that she definitely tended to present herself in the most favorable light possible, and that there was also a mild degree of paranoid attitude present. In view of the accusations leveled against her, and the general situation, Dr. Seller (who administered and analyzed the tests) felt that the paranoid-tinctured defensive attitude was understandable and appropriate . . .

"*Interpretation of Findings and Recommendation:* In view of the markedly conflicting histories and diametric viewpoints presented, it is obvious that one or both of the individuals involved in this case are misrepresenting and/or misinterpreting events, conversations, activities, and attitudes in which they mutually participated. If Mrs. Braut is actually guilty of the acts with which she is charged, then she is apparently a psychopathic liar —which definitely was *not* indicated by the projective psychological techniques employed by Dr. Seller, which are reasonably re-

liable instruments for detection of the psychopathic personality . . . On the other hand, the presence of homosexual trends elicited by the Rorschach test cannot be interpreted as meaning that she is, ipso facto, a practicing overt homosexual woman, nor can it be said that this demonstration of homosexual tendencies by the Rorschach test indicates she is the wrong kind of person to assign to teaching duties. In view of her immaculate academic record to date, it is reasonable to suppose that if she were actually a psychopathic liar with pathological sexuality she would have gotten into difficulties long before this . . . In any event, if Mrs. Braut is actually an overt Lesbian, there is no evidence to indicate that she is presently interested in cultivating an abnormal relationship with other than adult females . . .

"Because of the indications of Mrs. Spence's emotional instability, and the not far-fetched possibility of her own latent or unconscious homosexual component and desires, it seems requisite that Mrs. Spence be evaluated psychiatrically in the same manner as Mrs. Braut, before complete credence can be invested in her sworn testimony."

The Superintendent sent for Mrs. Braut and Mrs. Spence, separately, to discuss further steps. He received the following replies:

"I hereby submit my resignation, as I have been offered an unusual opportunity to teach in an exclusive Girls' Finishing School.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs. Hulda Braut."

"My sister is ill and will not be able to teach for some time. Please find her resignation enclosed herewith. Thank you.

Yours truly,
Mrs. Edward Waterman."

This particular case was cleared without official decision, although its major problem was merely shifted to the children of

a private school. Note, however, that the psychiatrist seems to think that homosexuality, even if actively practiced with other adults, does not necessarily mark one as "the wrong kind of person" to be in charge of children. At the same time, most psychiatrists are strongly of the opinion that even a teacher's "unconscious" tendencies and traits act upon and influence the children. This field certainly calls for fuller understanding and wiser consideration of the welfare of the young, whom we now trustingly leave to the ministrations of such troubled and deviant teachers.

Sometimes the obtrusion of sex is wholly hallucinatory. In such a case, it seems to be a major preoccupation which, as the person seeks to thrust it from the forefront of her attention, builds up a background of fantasy that ultimately bursts through and seems real. What then presents itself is likely to be, not something desirable, but an unwanted and objectionable invasion into an innocent pattern of living.

Thus Miss Adelaide Drummond, aged 46, a library assistant in the public school system of a center of automobile manufacture, came to attention by telephoning the superintendent, asking him to hurry over with a police officer, to check the confusion and obscenity in the school. The superintendent called the principal, who assured him that all was well.

Except with Miss Drummond. She stayed out of school for several weeks—this was in April—and wrote a lengthy letter to the principal. She complained that various teachers were so failing in co-operation as actually to hinder her work. Thus: "The uproar is really what is disturbing me now . . . Mrs. Roberts knew of the condition and she did nothing to stop it—the noise, the uproar, the obscene language . . . The boys are often obscene. They have been calling things in the hall outside the library. It is a positive uproar of filth . . . Last week and the week before, the boys began to be very fresh and filthy. Mrs. Roberts sent her class

to the Library but did not come in herself. One of her boys was obscene to me."

Miss Drummond was given leave of absence for "nervous exhaustion" for the rest of the term. This was followed by a sabbatical leave, at the end of which she was given a medical examination. The doctor requested that she be given a psychiatric examination. To the psychiatrist she stated:

"I don't make a fuss over older pupils. I'm not in any way the type of woman who is harmful to children. Miss Sorrell (the head librarian) invited me to come here. Now she makes out reports against me. She objected to my friendship with a Filipino girl whose home life was extremely unpleasant. It was nothing more than a desire to help her, on my part. The girl is now in charge of the filing department in a large office. She calls me on the phone twice a month or so."

Asked about her relations with a young substitute librarian (which had been mentioned by the principal), Miss Drummond declared: "There was absolutely nothing wrong. That girl had an affection for a young male teacher. I took it upon myself to warn him about her. After all, she was aggressive, emotionally immature, beautiful, intelligent, and charming. I passed the word quietly to him, and he dropped her."

The psychiatrist observed: "Miss Drummond's history does not underwrite any so-called 'classical' diagnostic entity in the psychiatric textbooks. It is almost axiomatic, however, that the 'classical' cases are rarely seen; the many variants are more commonly encountered. What the examiner labels them will be determined largely by his own viewpoint in psychiatric thinking, and whether or not he sees a case in descriptive or dynamic terms . . .

"Miss Drummond's recorded unrealistic and impulsive manner in attempting to cope with alleged vulgarities and obscene language among the students suggests emotional immaturity of a marked degree. From her admitted history of a serious though

frustrated love affair with a man who attracted her through a fancied resemblance to the poet Auden, from her reaction to alleged sexual obscenities, from the filed material noting her preoccupation with sexually stimulating pictures and literature, her fooling around with the disguised amorous 'personals' of a weekly magazine, her vicarious excitement from her 'supervision' of and interference with the real or fancied amours of girl students and substitutes, it is evident that the heightened sexual tensions accompanying the incidence of her menopause were enough to produce a psychotic reaction. Her actions, including her not infrequent conflicts with women, may represent an unconscious defense against her own (unconscious?) homosexual impulses . . . There is a distinctly schizophrenic matrix. Enough of her ego-boundaries and defense remain intact, however, to permit her to get by, most of the time. I feel that she is what we call a 'functioning schizophrenic' of the simplex type. The interpretation of the word 'functioning' must be made by the administrative authorities . . . It is conceivable that, under stress and emotional frustration, she will experience another psychotic episode, probably of a paranoid variety. Psychiatrically, it seems inadvisable to continue this woman at a level of employment where she may unwittingly influence students' thinking and feeling in an adverse manner. She might be continued as office help if she can be more or less isolated from students and, preferably, where she has little opportunity to socialize with women."

Miss Adelaide Drummond, questioned by school officials as to her present state of health, replied: "I've never felt better." In the light of the psychiatric report, she was retired.

Especially significant here is the psychiatrist's feeling about the teacher's possible influence. She was guilty of no known overt homosexual act; she was apparently unconscious of any homosexual tendencies. She came to the psychiatrist "neatly dressed, amiable in manner, and she talked without hesitation or undue restraint." In spite of all this, he recommended that she be given

little opportunity "to socialize with women" and he was deeply concerned lest she "unwittingly influence students' thinking and feeling in an adverse manner." If those in whom perverse impulses are unconscious can unwittingly influence the young in harmful ways, the testing of those who are to enter upon the vital career of teaching is woefully lacking in mental and psychological safeguards.

There is a much more direct contact with pupils in the story of Karl Deutsch, aged 39, Satisfactory throughout his 13 years of high-school teaching in the middle west. Parents of 4 boys in the school came with a serious charge against Mr. Deutsch. He indignantly denied their accusation of exhibitionism and group sexual play. When he was confronted with pictures of himself and some of his pupils, nude, he stated that these were taken, quite innocently, in the dressing room of a swimming pool. Under further questioning, however, and after hearing statements of 7 of his pupils, Mr. Deutsch confessed to homosexual practices extending over a period of 3 years. (Beyond that, there was no evidence; one can merely speculate as to the start.) For face-saving purposes, Mr. Deutsch requested that he be assigned to work outside the classroom for the remainder of the term. To save the pupils involved from the shock and stresses of public attention, Mr. Karl Deutsch was retired for disability.

Informal questioning among Mr. Deutsch's colleagues disclosed that several of them had long been aware of his tendencies, though not of their active expression. One of his fellow teachers, 5 years before, had warned him to watch his step; he was getting too friendly with the boys. Others stated that for some years they suspected he had been a sort of center for the exchange of pornography.

Many teachers, in the course of their work, may catch a pupil looking at, or passing to another child, pictures or stories that are clearly pornographic. "Anyone who knows a little about what is

going on beneath the surface of education and formal youth activities," observed George N. Schuster, former President of Hunter College, "has seen some of this merchandise and come to realize that more boys and girls than it is pleasant to think about have been exposed through this material to raw sex and human perversion in forms very few adults would even have dreamed of 50 years ago." A teacher noticing children passing pornography may indignantly haul the purveyor before the person in charge of school discipline or, perhaps more wisely, have a "straight from the shoulder" talk with the pupil after school. The pornography will of course be confiscated and destroyed—though before tearing it up the teacher may say to a few close friends in the faculty: "Look what I caught in class this morning!"

Karl Deutsch was showing that sort of thing to other teachers much too often. Always he had gotten it "from a kid"; but he had such things, and was displaying them, far more frequently than could be explained by the accident of catching someone surreptitiously taking a look in class. Yet, of course, no one had dreamed of reporting such incidents, or of raising any question regarding Mr. Deutsch's fitness to remain as a teacher and guide of young men. It was not until some pupils—less docile or more disgusted or afraid than the rest—had spoken to their parents, that action was taken to cleanse the system of this man.

Note also that when the action was taken it was (as implied above) with some indignation, if not with punitive intent, for the welfare of the children no doubt, but wholly without regard to the fate of the unfortunate teacher. The psychiatrist had reported:

"I am dubious about the prognosis, because of certain details that lead me to regard Karl Deutsch as having a schizoid personality, which may be the basis for a slowly evolving schizophrenic psychosis. He is certainly not fit to teach at the present time . . . I have told him to make inquiry as to sabbatical leave *versus* disability retirement so that, if he has a right to elect, he

can choose what will be acceptable to the school authorities and will facilitate resumption of duty at such time as he may be found recovered."

There was no question of resumption of duty for Karl Deutsch.

Just as with other symptoms of mental disturbance, sex may be basically the seat and source of the disorder, or its thrust into the foreground may be a symptom of a different affliction. The impulses to sexual activity are, in most persons, fairly frequent and strong; with any weakening of the will they may surge into expression. And, among the delusions, those involving sexual activity have prominent place.

A woman who is emotionally frustrated, whose outpouring love has lost its object, or who has longed in vain for a mate to fulfill her destiny and fill her days, may picture herself, in her dream world, as the center of masculine interest and attention. She may even see herself as the object of lustful advances, which partly attract and partly repel her. She both desires and dreads them. And after a time, they may come to seem real.

Dorothy Dearchild was a young teacher, in her first year, when in quick succession her father and her brother, Marty, died. Soon after, she went to the office of the Superintendent. Her mother and her sister went along, to lend support. There follows part of what they said:

"*Dorothy:* I wish to complain against Mr. Bein, my assistant principal.

"*Superintendent:* What is your complaint?

"*Dorothy:* He is a bum. He showed me pornographic pictures, and made advances to me.

"*Mother:* That bum is alive and my son is dead. Now we are 3 women, alone in the world.

"*Sister:* What are you going to do about that bum?

"*Superintendent:* If your sister will testify at a hearing against Mr. Bein, we may be able to get rid of him.

"Dorothy: I never want to see him again.

"Sister: I will not let her testify. She is too sick because of all this. She spent the last 2 days in bed.

"Mother: I won't allow her to testify. She has had enough of this. I want to have her transferred, that's all. God will take care of him.

"Superintendent: I can do nothing without your testimony.

"Dorothy: I don't want to see his face again. I won't testify. I am ashamed enough now, without any public fuss."

The Superintendent tried, informally, to check on Mr. Bein, but could find nothing. His report ends: "I was inclined, however, to believe Miss Dearchild's story. She spoke in a sincere and forthright manner. Unable to take other steps, I transferred the teacher, in accordance with her request and that of her mother and sister." He left word with the principal to keep a quiet watch on Mr. Bein.

A year later, Miss Dearchild was examined by the school doctor, because of unexplained absence. He found her, with her mother and her sister, living with an old man in an apartment where they slept on the floor. To the doctor she repeated her story that Mr. Bein had made improper advances. Her new principal, she said, looked at her lecherously but was usually too drunk to stand up without leaning against a desk or chair. The doctor recommended that Miss Dearchild be given a psychiatric examination.

To the psychiatrist, Miss Dearchild explained that the family had been evicted because the house was being sold. An old man who felt sorry for them let them sleep on blankets on the floor of his apartment, but now he was telling them they had to go. Most of their belongings, she said, were in the closets of friends or in lockers at the railway station. She could not go to school because she had to hunt for a place to live. The psychiatrist wrote:

"Miss Dearchild was wearing a neat tailored suit. Her blouse

and accessories appeared to be clean and in order. She protested that she saw no sense in her having to come to this office. According to her, there were no problems, no conflicts, no disturbances; no discomforts, no preoccupation with difficulties in interpersonal relationships or in her job. All that mattered was the housing problem. This, they had taken up with the City Housing Authority, the American Legion, the Board of Welfare, and the Mayor's office . . . The implication of her replies and attitudes was that she was very easy-going, had no enemies, liked everybody, had always felt completely comfortable in her job and with her superiors, never indulged in any impulsive, negativistic, accusatory or belligerent activity. In the face of mild and circumspect probing into her sexual thoughts and activities, she exhibited a resigned attitude of ennui for the remainder of the interview . . .

"The most impressive aspect of this examination was my subjective feeling that I was talking to an empty chair. It was as though a talking mechanism was sitting in my consultation room. My diagnostic impression is that Miss Dearchild is schizophrenic, with hebephrenic and paranoid features . . .

"*Recommendation:* This girl is mentally sick and should not be regarded as stable enough for assignment to her customary duties. The potentialities for a further expansion of her psychosis into embarrassing or even assaultive developments augur against employing her at all. I advise immediate action, as her presence in school constitutes a serious danger."

The psychiatrist, as a check on his own impressions, made an appointment for Miss Dearchild to take a Rorschach test. This appointment she did not keep. Nor did she return to school.

About a month later, the Superintendent received a note from the Police Department: "Mrs. Anna Dearchild and her two daughters, one of them, Dorothy, a teacher, living in a rented room on Sixth Street, were reported by neighbors. For the last week, in the late night hours, the 3 women have shouted from

their open windows that they were being raped and murdered. After a check, they had to be placed in straitjackets and forcibly removed by ambulance."

After mental examinations, Miss Dorothy Dearchild, her sister, and her mother were committed to a state mental hospital. Perhaps God *was* taking care of Mr. Bein.

Frustration in sex may lead to serious disturbance. Many a young girl selects teaching as a pleasant occupation until "the right man" comes along. Sometimes such a woman sets her standards too high; being a teacher, she rejects the notion of marriage with, say, a bus driver or a plumber; only a doctor or a lawyer or another teacher will satisfy her demands. Marriages of 2 teachers are fairly frequent, especially in large cities; but it may be that in her elementary school the 2 men teachers are already married. Or for other reasons, such as the fact that there just are more women than men, the teacher does not find a spouse.

Very often such a teacher has discovered that she enjoys her work, and the children in her classes feel the warmth of love and genuine concern that might have been lavished upon her own offspring. But sometimes such a teacher grows into a disappointed and bitter old maid, competent to control a classroom, but not interested in her work nor in her pupils. The marrow has dried in the bone. Even more rarely, the teacher begins to build a fantasy world, of the men who had desired her, who had been eager to marry her, but whom she scorned or—worse still—whom antagonistic colleagues, neighbors or inimical forces had driven from her side.

Miss Sally Krivett, aged 40, was in the 13th year of her Satisfactory teaching in a midwestern state, when she went to the principal. She sought leave to address the next monthly faculty meeting, so she could tell the other teachers to stop talking about her. The principal, calling the superintendent, told him that

this was the climax of a long series of odd complaints and requests. The superintendent, coming to observe Miss Krivett teach, found her in good control of the class, but sensed a severe tension within the teacher. He requested a psychiatric examination.

As soon as the psychiatrist asked Miss Krivett what her problem was, she answered: "My love life."

"I used to think it was a spy ring," she went on. "Now I think it's some kind of experiment to see if my love can be killed. I've heard so many people on the radio and television talking about it, for years."

Asked what these persons said, Miss Krivett explained: "Oh, what I'm supposed to do and say, or certain ways I am to act at certain times. It's all very funny."

Miss Krivett stated that she had met a man 11 years ago, and had been in love with him ever since. "Right after I met him, I felt that I wanted to have a child by him." Asked if she had ever given him the opportunity, she replied: "Now, that's very personal. A few months ago some detectives told me to do something—but it's personal, and I'd rather not discuss it."

Miss Krivett said that this man had several times asked her to marry him. The first time, a relative had told her to say No; later, she declared, detectives had told her things about the man that made her reject him. "Then I found out that they had told me lies. Somebody was paying them to frame me. I have no enemies; it's all a big experiment . . . They used to lie about me, too. Over 10 years ago, a rumor was spread in the neighborhood—everybody was talking about it—that I was a Lesbian. When that didn't work, they began to say I was a prostitute."

She also declared that the Governor of the State had talked to her on the radio, and once President Eisenhower in a broadcast had made a reference to her.

Three years ago, she remembered, a girl had fallen to the floor in her classroom. "Her mother came to school and explained to me something about a membrane, and there were blood spots on

the girl's panties when we picked her up. It dawned on me later what she meant about the membrane . . . I think it was all part of a plot to undermine my health."

When Miss Krivett was called before the Retirement Committee, her sister came instead and told the Committee that Sally had been mentally ill for several years. She was retired, and placed by her family in a private mental sanatorium. The family could ill afford the expense, but the mother insisted upon a private institution because "my son was confined in a public asylum, and was beaten to death by the guards."

Miss Sally Krivett had been ill for at least 5 years, for "many years," the psychiatrist reported, "from a schizophrenic illness of the paranoid variety." She had to go out of her classroom and seek the principal, trying to enlist him in her aberrant activity, before he was moved to bring her to attention. Who knows how many teachers, less bold in self-defense, may still be releasing their tensions upon the children in their classes?

While pupils have been involved in some of the stories just told, these have presented no instances of actual classroom sexual misbehavior. There are, however, instances of apparent homosexual interest if not activity, and of excessive sexual preoccupation, that have manifested themselves in behavior in the classroom. One of these should suffice to indicate the pattern.

Frances Held, aged 59, had 35 years of Satisfactory elementary school teaching in Maryland. She was reported by her principal, who said:

"Mrs. Held was transferred here 'for the good of the service.' I see no good that has come from her. She is a vain, overbearing, cantankerous woman who has served in many schools and, though always rated Satisfactory, has been a canker in every school including mine. Her work is technically Satisfactory, but her relationship with parents and pupils leaves much to be desired. My assistant and I, in Mrs. Held's 3 years here, have talked

to her on innumerable occasions about her 'advice' to her pupils, but she goes on repeating her silly remarks and actions. The following statements of her pupils, which I could multiply, indicate why I think she is not fit to continue to teach:

"1. 'She told us how not to act in the movies when we sit in the last row. She called me up and demonstrated.'

"2. 'Mrs. Held talked about sex problems, and how to behave at the movies with a boy. She said she should have had children because of her large breasts. She put her hands up, over her dress, to show us how big they are.'

"3. 'She said when a boy and a girl were on a swing, the girl started kissing him on the back of the neck and on his face and all over, and the boy started getting wild. The girl ran away and the boy started running after her, but Mrs. Held stopped him . . . I don't like the way she talks about her breasts . . . She lifted her dress up and showed us her underwear.'

"4. 'She told us about when she was a girl, a man exposed himself on the street and she ran all the way home. She told us to be sure to go away at once if that happened to us.'

"5. 'She used to talk about her husband all the time. She combed her hair in class to show us how pretty it was. She used to lift her dress up and show us her petticoat and panties.'

"6. 'She talked about things we are not supposed to know yet. I felt embarrassed when she talked about sex problems.'

"7. 'She used to do silly things. She took a piece of cloth and wrapped it around her to represent a saint or something, and walked around the room. I felt embarrassed when she would discuss sex problems. She used to lift her dress and show us her panties. She told us the first night she was married she thought she would have a baby right away because she has such big breasts.'

"8. 'Once when I got a ring from a boy friend, Mrs. Held asked me: "What did you give him?" I said: "I didn't give him anything." She said: "Are you sure? Haven't you something that's

worth a thousand dollars?" All the class was listening, and I felt very embarrassed . . .'

"Despite the fact that I have asked *Mr.* Held to keep away from the school building, he comes to school almost every day and annoys teachers and my assistant with complaints. He is a retired Police Department clerk and he threatens to report 'conditions' to the police and the School Board. He insists that, as a citizen, he has the right to enter a school building, and he 'dares' me to arrest him. I am sick and tired of both Mr. and Mrs. Held and I must ask for immediate relief."

Mr. Held accompanied his wife to the Superintendent's office. After 2 interviews, the Superintendent concluded: "Mrs. Held is a big, unattractive woman while Mr. Held is a small, meek, mousy man. Mrs. Held considers herself beautiful, irresistible; Mr. Held concurs in this opinion. Mrs. Held believes her husband is lucky to have married her, while he is grateful to her for having married him.

"Mrs. Held thinks that the world is conspiring against her. Mr. Held holds this to be a fact and, like Don Quixote, he will defend her. The pair live in a world peopled with many enemies: the principal, the assistant superintendent, myself, and many more.

"Mrs. Held is obsessed by sex, while Mr. Held avoids all reference to sex. There lurks in Mr. Held's mind the suspicion that Mrs. Held's difficulties are owing to the fact that all men desire her, but she resists their eager concupiscence. Mrs. Held 'knows' that all women who have been appointed to higher positions have 'paid the price.' She was never willing to pay the price; hence the persecution. Mr. Held declares over and over again: 'She is a wonderful woman! There's not another like her in the whole school system!' Mrs. Held declares: 'He is so intelligent, so refined, so different.' In both cases, nothing could be further from the truth."

There is no need to detail all the ways in which Mr. Held tried to tilt at windmills for his wife. He constantly interrupted the

Superintendent. He sent the school psychiatrist a check, "your fee for spending over 2 hours in conversation with Mrs. Held, which was beneficial to her and no doubt you got some valuable information out of it, yourself." He tried to see the psychiatrist alone, and at the interviews so identified himself with his wife's concerns and lack of insight that the psychiatrist suggested this was a case of folie à deux.

(Folie à deux: A delusional system shared by two persons, usually husband and wife, or sisters. One accepts as real the delusions that the other has developed, and the two live together in this fantasy world.)

The psychiatrist concluded: "Mrs. Held is using such poor judgment that she should not be allowed to teach. She is a source of dangerous infection to the children she teaches, in view of her obvious obsession with sex, caused by mental illness."

To the Retirement Committee, Mrs. Held at first denied all the allegations. When they were examined severally, she admitted the substance but not the language reported. She declared, in a superior tone and manner, that she was giving the children the benefit of her education and good taste. "I don't have to teach; my husband is well able to support me. I teach because I can do so much to guide children." Her husband—who had been admittted to the hearing on his promise to remain silent—now said in a loud tone: "She's the best teacher in the school system and everybody knows it. It's just jealousy, that's all!"

Mrs. Frances Held was retired. No one knows for how many of her 35 "Satisfactory" years she had been titillating or alarming the girls in her classes with paraded sex.

The more direct aspects of heterosexual activity have also come into play between teacher and pupil. Jane, a young girl in a small town in Nebraska, was delighted when her teacher, Frank Lester, chose her to walk with him on a Spring Saturday, and after Frank made love to her in the woods, she was eager to repeat the ex-

perience . . . until a remark by Jane's jealous elder sister revealed that, 2 years before, Frank had similarly initiated the elder girl. He apparently chose one girl each year to favor with lessons in this extracurricular field. Nor was it possible to ascertain for how many years Frank Lester had been giving such private coaching before sororal jealousy led to his exposure and dismissal.

Gladys Hamelin was a 37-year-old high-school teacher, a widow with a daughter of 16, in a midwestern town that for years had had a champion football team. And for years Gladys had been teaching sex to the football stars. Each year, for how many she did not confess, she began by inviting the Captain to her home for "tea," and after the tea teased him into intimacies. After a session or two in which she taught him variations on the sexual theme, she told him to bring another of "the boys" with him the next time. She was able to take good care of them both. Her mistake came the season she decided that they again expand operations. When the three boys arrived together, for a "special treat" Gladys called in her 16-year-old daughter, and added her favors as a fresh spice to the afternoon's orgy.

The daughter was not unwilling, but the team's captain, struck by the pangs of a belated conscience, confessed to his parents. The next triple tryst was interrupted by the police. Everything was kept very quiet, but high-school teacher Gladys Hamelin and her daughter moved out of town very suddenly. They are now living in a southern state favored by many teams for winter practice.

The deviations into which a distorted mind and aberrant desires may lead susceptible children are beyond surmise, and certainly beyond present telling. Although doubtless more of them occur than ever come to light, they are, after all, quite rare. A teacher must be either quite reckless or truly sick with a compulsion beyond control, even to think of drawing a child into sexual activity, or to venture such activity with a child, on whose discreet

silence it is impossible to rely. Such teachers must be immediately removed from any position that affords them access to children, who are likely to be trustful, docile, and even flattered by the teacher's favor. At the same time, it should be recognized that a person who thus misguides children placed in her care is almost certainly a sick person, requiring not punishment but sympathetic understanding and treatment that may lead to a cure.

Joseph Ayres had an enviable school record. Graduating from college at 19, he was a licensed teacher at 21 and an elementary school principal at 31, an extremely early age to achieve so responsible a post.

As a principal, he gave signs of emotional instability. Finding it hard to secure good substitutes for absent teachers (a phenomenon by no means unusual), he wrote to his district superintendent: "I am quite willing to admit my inability to cope with the situation, and suggest the appointment in my stead of a principal who thinks he can."

To this the superintendent replied: "A military commander who might have a large number of recruits to break in could not be expected to make the same showing as one with a uniformly well-trained force. Similarly, a principal can be accountable only for as good results as may be obtainable with the material at hand."

Somewhat later, Mr. Ayres was reprimanded for failure to obey the bylaws, which require reporting a teacher "whose physical or mental condition is apparently such as to render him unfit for service." One of his teachers, whom he did not report, was suffering from Bell's palsy and high blood pressure which culminated in a cerebral hemorrhage.

In spite of these perhaps minor divagations, Joseph Ayres passed the examinations, and was promoted to the principalship of a junior high school. Later investigation of his record showed that Mr. Ayres was oversevere. For years he had berated and grossly irritated his teachers and had been abrupt and unsympathetic to

parents and children. None of these attitudes and abuses, however, brought him to official attention. Mr. Ayres was an always Satisfactory principal aged 47 when the Superintendent received a communication from the Chief of Detectives of the city:

"Three boys from his junior high school were asked by principal Joseph Ayres to scare a lady, because she was a witness in a case and he wanted her to leave town. The boys were to strip off her clothing. Jimmy, aged 15, was to hold her mouth so that she could make no outcry; John, aged 14, was to hold her legs; Frank, aged 17, was to get between her legs and have sexual relations with her. The boys consented and were given $15 each.

"The principal went with the boys to the door of the apartment, which he opened, and the boys went in. On hearing a man's voice (the boys were not all agreed it was a man's voice) they became frightened and ran down to the street. The principal, unable to persuade them to return to the apartment, asked them to meet him the following Sunday. He would secrete them in the bathroom while the lady was out, and on her return—when naturally she would go into the bathroom—they could easily proceed as he had instructed them."

In the meantime Frank, who was on probation, spoke to his Probation Officer. The three boys were interviewed, and on Sunday, at the apartment, Joseph Ayres was taken into custody.

Before the district attorney, and again to the school psychiatrist, Mr. Ayres admitted asking the boys to scare the lady, but denied any suggestion of physical mishandling and rape. Frank had testified:

"He asked us: 'Any of you ever do it to a girl?' I told him 'Yeah.' 'You know how?' 'Yeah.' 'Then go ahead. Have a good time . . . Be sure, Jimmy, you keep a handkerchief in your hands over her mouth.'"

The lady unwittingly involved in the situation was Mrs. Joseph Ayres. There had been a 4-year conflict between Mr. Ayres and

his wife, culminating in a bitter struggle for the control of their child. Mr. Ayres thought that, by having three boys "scare" his wife, he could drive her from the city or at least from the house, and leave himself to care for their 12-year-old son.

The psychiatrist concluded: "Mr. Ayres is suffering from both a psychoneurotic state and a personality deviation. His mental condition is such that he requires prolonged psychiatric supervision and guidance. This condition did not develop overnight, but is of very long standing. In fact, Mr. Ayres has been unfit to be a teacher or a principal for a very long time, just how long I do not know. What is incomprehensible to me is that his conduct over the years did not suggest to the school authorities the need for investigation. Why does it take so long in a school system to discover persons in need of psychiatric treatment? I can understand that in a factory or a business house strange conduct might be put down to eccentricity, but school authorities, who are supposed to have had some training in psychology, should have the ability to recognize clear-cut cases of mental disturbance.

"It is possible, even probable, that competent psychiatric treatment, applied at the right time, might have saved a useful citizen for society: an intelligent principal whose education and training represent a considerable investment, for the school system; and a husband and father, for his family.

"I cannot absolve school authorities from their responsibility in this case. I repeat, the tragedy can be laid directly at the door of your supervisory officials who failed to report Mr. Ayres at the proper time. Mental cases especially—like physical cancer—must be diagnosed early so that adequate treatment can be applied. I believe that Mr. Ayres could have been treated successfully early in his career, and I think that the treatment need not have been very extensive. Now, however, it may require many years to effect a cure and it is quite possible that a cure will never

be effected . . . I think that his case should be a guide to your supervisors in the future, and I hope they will take the Ayres case to heart."

Rather than precipitate a public scandal, the Police Department left Mr. Ayres to be handled by the school authorities. Before they could act, Mr. Ayres sent the following letter:

"Kindly accept my resignation, effective immediately.

Yours very truly,

Joseph Ayres."

That is, unfortunately, not quite the end of the Ayres situation. Four months later, one of the highest education officials came to the Superintendent and suggested that Joseph Ayres had been punished enough for his one mistake and should be reinstated. When the Superintendent said that he would not take any such step, the official told him he regarded his refusal as an "unfriendly act" and a "professional discourtesy."

Ignorance alone can do tremendous damage; let us hope it is seldom compounded with mistaken friendship or outright dishonesty, heedless of the welfare of the children and the schools.

Readers who recognize the seriousness of the sexual problem in the schools have perhaps reflected that it is by no means confined to teachers. Junior and senior high-school boys and girls have all the curiosity the changes of puberty naturally rouse in them, the natural desire to learn the meaning of these changes, the meaning of sex. And one of the maxims of modern education is that it is best to learn by doing. Custodians will tell head-shaking tales of used contraceptives found in school meeting rooms, student club rooms and toilets, after school hours. One midwestern high-school senior, back from a summer's trip to the two coasts, confided to his advisor that the main difference between the eastern girls and the western is that the western girls carry

their own contraceptives. But it was in an eastern high school that a perturbed teacher told a group of his colleagues the story of "a friend." The "friend's wife"—and his concern made everyone feel that this was a thin disguise for his own family—going into the bedroom where her daughter's friends had left their coats and purses, noticed one of the purses lying open. Picking it up to close it, she saw that there were contraceptives inside. She called her daughter and asked: "Do you know what kind of friends you have?"—and showed her the contents of the purse. The daughter exclaimed: "Oh, Mother, you're so old-fashioned!" and unconcernedly went back to the other girls.

To these individual indications of adolescent sexual activity, a few more general observations may be added. "The maximum sexual frequencies occur in the teens." This is a conclusion of the documented "Kinsey Reports," which itemize:

Of the women, 48% recalled pre-adolescent sex play, half of these with adult males.

By the age of 15, by masturbation or sexual contacts, 28% of the females and 95% of the males had experienced orgasm.

Of the girls married by the age of 20, 50% had engaged in premarital coitus. And of all marriages in the United States in 1959, 47% of the brides were in their teens.

The Gilbert Youth Research project reported in 1951 that of those who had had premarital intercourse, 20% of the males and 25% of the females had experienced intercourse by the age of 14, and 50% of the males and 67% of the females had experienced intercourse before they were 17. Dr. Winston Ehrmann reported, in *Premarital Dating Behavior* (1959) that approximately three-quarters of the females and two-thirds of the males in his study began dating before they were 15 years old, and "well over one-half of each sex had their first coital experience before the usual age for entering college."

Children with such sexual awareness, still within the school

years, are ready, in fact or fancy, to leap through any loophole left by an unmindful or naive or, conversely, an oversexed or lustful teacher.

Here again the attitude of the community colors the situation. As the headmaster of Summerhill, a modern school in England, put it, "I am free to tell a child that there is no harm in masturbation, but if a State teacher did so he might well lose his job."

There is cold comfort in the thought that this curiosity and consequent action are by no means exclusively an American problem. In London Dr. Simon Galin told the National Union of Teachers, at its meeting of October, 1960, that he saves himself embarrassment by always knocking on the door before entering a classroom.

"There may be a couple of school kids making love inside," he explained. "Once when I knocked, I was told not to come in."

Dr. Galin summed up the change in student behavior: "They used to make love, if at all, in secret. Then they made love in a secluded corner of the playground. Now they do it in the classroom." The doctor asked a couple of teenagers why they could not wait to make love until they were through with school. They stood holding hands, looking at the teacher. Then the girl said: "We may be dead in 10 years."

A 14-year-old girl, testifying against 11 young men lined up for rape in a Los Angeles court, asked by the judge "Why did you do it?" answered: "Because I like it. Why do you do it, Judge?"

Such attitudes, such lack of moral scruples combined with lack of hope for the future, need little encouragement from an afflicted teacher to flame into active sexual expression. It should rather be the function of the teacher to instill in the pupils a more wholesome and courageous outlook on life in general and thence a greater measure of self-control.

Unfortunately, the teacher may be unable to exercise such con-

trol even upon herself. There may be within the teacher a carefully hidden but at times uncontrollable impulse to misconduct. The number of persons with criminal records who teach, or apply for teaching, can only be guessed. That it is a considerable number, in the large cities, may be gathered from the action of the New York City Board of Education, in September, 1960, requiring all applicants for teaching posts to be fingerprinted. And in May, 1961, a teacher of English in a junior high school, arrested on charges of attempted rape, was discovered to have been twice previously arrested "in Peeping-Tom situations," and twice sent for psychiatric examinations. In 1957, he was placed on two years' probation; no disposition was recorded of the 1959 arrest. He was still teaching at the time of his third arrest in 1961. Of the first 4,545 applicants checked in New York, 134, or just under 3%, had police records.

The changing attitude of society toward various offenses and crimes is reflected in popular literature, as well as in supposedly serious scientific works. What once were books intended exclusively for physicians and other specialists, were issued after Freud in the guise of "case-histories" to be presented in detail to an avid general public, which read long actual accounts of the lurid adventures of persons swirling in alcoholism, narcotic addiction, and various sexual excesses and deviations, all in the name of science. The "Kinsey Reports" of the sexual behavior of the "human male" and the "human female" became best sellers.

Manifestly, if secondhand accounts of such matters made money, the next step was to have the deviators and delinquents themselves tell their stories; all would be well if they pictured final redemption and cure. There poured forth a spate of autobiographies and confessions by dope addicts, drunkards, keepers of brothels, and their pals. The writers were usually rather young,

sometimes with considerable Hollywood or tabloid renown. After a time some of them discovered that the sordid details would sell the book, even without a "happy ending."

Among such recent autobiographical volumes, issued by an old and reputable publishing house, one carries a full back-of-the-jacket picture of the fetching 27-year-old author; the blurb announces that her book is "the story of a woman who was a brilliant graduate student, a dedicated and beloved teacher—and a prostitute." According to her own tale, she was a $100-a-turn call girl while teaching in Chicago. She continued the double activity while teaching in a New York high school—until arrested on charges of prostitution. Her book indicates no compunction nor remorse, no sense that her personality might unwittingly have acted as a corruptive force on her pupils. Sex just didn't seem important enough to her to rouse feelings of guilt. She states that she enjoyed teaching; she regrets that the publicity attendant upon her arrest and her three months in jail make it impossible for her to continue in the classroom. "I still woke up every morning," she says on her final page, "with a guilty feeling because I wasn't going to school." Her income as a prostitute, of course, kept her free from the worrying and pinching a mere teacher's salary might have pressed upon her; her mind was at ease while she was with the children. Her autobiography is hopeful; it ends: "I enjoy writing, and I have confidence I can earn enough as a writer to eat regularly while I am learning my craft—and not every writer has had the same postgraduate course in human nature."

At the time of her New York arrest, headlines had blazed: "School Marm Is V-Doll"—"Teacher Arrested as Call Girl." While she was in jail, her "agent" was approached about a book and a movie based on her story.

Here is a basic challenge to complacency. The girl's first activities in her extracurricular "profession" took place at a conference of college executives—who would in all probability have moved

for the instant dismissal of any of their staff caught in such sexual offense. Is the critical word *caught?* Is it only after she was *known* as a "bad woman" that the prostitute became a bad teacher? We are familiar with the policeman's observation:

> When a felon's not engaged in his employment,
> Or maturing his felonious little plans,
> His capacity for innocent enjoyment
> Is just as great as any honest man's.

We may, then, expect to hear—in truth, we have already heard—psychiatrists remark:

> When a prostitute's not prone in her profession,
> Or seeking to cash in on her cute charm,
> She can help the little tots learn self-expression
> And never do the darlings any harm.

"Yet have they many baits and guileful spells to inveigle and invite the unwary sense." This woman was teaching adolescents in high school.

It should be clear that our social climate must be re-examined to ascertain whether it is conducive to the proper growth of the nation, of the free world, of the human race. Do we preach one standard and live by another? Is hypocrisy the basis of the schools' moral code? In a wider sphere, is not precisely this charge made against us Americans, around the world?

These are searching questions that must be answered, if the schools are to do the job for which they are intended, the job that is crucial for the continuance of democratic living. Such questioning will probe deep into the minds and mores of those whom we regard as normal. This book can do no more than indicate the need for this line of study, by focussing present attention upon teachers who are mentally—emotionally, morally—disturbed and ill.

21

Lack of Interest and Hatred of the Work

THERE ARE MANY REASONS that may lead a student to select teaching as a career. Although the words "vocation" and "calling" have largely lost their original sense of a devoted impulsion toward a specific career, there still are persons to whom that older sense applies, who, for instance, turn to teaching as truly dedicated workers in the field. We like to believe that there are many, both men and women, who thus devotedly give their lives to the guidance and training of children.

There are some who embark upon a teaching career because it seems to offer shelter from the storms of life, to save timid or inturned souls from the constant strain of contact and conflict with aggressive adults. To such, teaching proves to have strains of its own, perhaps even more severe.

Women, who form the great majority of teachers below the college level, may find other appeals that lead them into the field. It has long seemed to offer fewer hours of work, with better pay and a longer vacation than other lines of endeavor. All of these advantages, although lessening somewhat, still prevail. And there is still some pattern of prestige, a sort of aura of gentility and distinction in the "profession" of teaching. Many a woman, therefore, decides to take up teaching until she gets married.

Whatever the complex of motives, or family suggestion, or drift, that leads a person into teaching, she is likely, once in, to

be drawn by its challenge into effective work. The eager, bustling curiosity of growing children and their warm response to affectionate and interested guidance tug at the heart. The great educator Pestalozzi has well said: "The basic principle of education is not teaching, but love." Talk to any good teacher about her work, and you will see tendrils of that love thrusting through.

Most of those who enter teaching because it is "easy work" learn their mistake, but at the same time are caught into its joys and accept its responsibilities as part of an over-all pleasant process. (This refers to the way the work impinges upon their own personality, apart from their sense of its social value and communal significance. They find, in simple terms, that they like to teach.) Those who enter the profession as a prologue to matrimony also discover that teaching has its own compensations. Whether they marry or not, they are likely to respond with love to the trust and eagerness of the children. From such varied sources do good teachers spring.

Not all who enter upon a teaching career, unfortunately, achieve such harmony. Some who sought an easy way of life find it too difficult. Under its constant, insistent pressure they become irritated, they strain to keep order, they grow ready to shake an angry head in agreement with those who refer to the classroom as "the blackboard jungle." And some who sought the smooth path to a wedding find themselves shriveling into dry old maids. Perhaps they are at first unwittingly jealous of the mothers of the children in their classes, but later they come to wonder how anyone can lengthily put up with "the little brats." Thus a minority—it is to be hoped, a small minority—of those who continue to teach dislike their work.

It is true that many persons in many fields work only because they have to, and dislike what therefore seems their daily drudgery. No matter how much a mechanic or a seamstress may hate the work, however, it gives the worker little relief to "take it out on" the machines. School children, on the contrary, being

little and animate and constantly bobbing up, are ready and easy targets for a dissatisfied teacher's spleen.

This general sense of discontent or hatred of one's work is of course a serious mental and emotional affliction. It is not necessarily a disease. It may color a teacher's life; it may darken the prospect of every child who has to endure her bile, without ever breaking into overtly Unsatisfactory conduct. Teachers of this sort, familiar to everyone who works in a school system, are likely to continue engendering bitterness and hate in countless children, until death or the mandatory retirement age removes them from the class. In the meantime, they have helped to discolor and distort the personalities of their pupils, in ways beyond measure but often also beyond cure.

It is only by accident that such a teacher comes to official attention, and only on other grounds that she may be discharged.

George Sherman was an attendance officer, aged 62, with 25 years of Satisfactory service in a middle states factory town, when a police officer complained about him. The policeman had been summoned by two men, who were supporting an hysterical woman. They said that a man had been shouting at her in vile language, and making obscene gestures. He hurried away as they approached, and they hailed the officer.

When the officer quieted the woman, she stated that a man passing her had said "Hello, Mom!" Thinking this was a friendly greeting, she had answered "Hello, Pop!"—and at once the man broke into vile and abusive language, with words and gestures relating to his and her private parts.

A watching boy volunteered the information that the man was Mr. Sherman, "the hookey cop," and the officer filed a complaint. When this was sent to the Superintendent, he asked for Mr. Sherman's record. The report was voluminous, but its most significant statement declared: "Mr. Sherman always speaks with great contempt of the children he has to handle. He hates everybody; I sometimes think he hates himself."

Among the specific statements regarding Mr. Sherman's conduct as an attendance officer, the following are but a few:

"Mr. Sherman had been riding without permission in the car of Mrs. Rexford, another attendance officer, and was told to discontinue this practice . . . Mr. Sherman lunched with Mrs. Rexford in 'Jim's Bar and Grill,' which is outside Mrs. Rexford's district. There has been unpleasant gossip about these two officers . . ."

"Mr. Sherman has several times been accused of making anti-Catholic remarks . . ."

"Mr. Sherman's appearance, actions, and speech are vulgar and boorish. He often walks about with his shirt open at the neck and his tie pulled to one side. He picks his nose constantly; he puts his finger in his mouth as though fishing for food-particles between his teeth; and he spits. He often, during working hours, has the smell of beer on his breath. His speech includes such remarks as: 'De foist time I seen 'em.' 'I didn't say nuttin'.' 'I takes a glass o' beer but I ain't no drunk; I don't drink reg'lar.' . . . At times a generally unpleasant odor emanates from his person."

To the Superintendent, Mr. Sherman said that the officer's complaint was a "plant." He had greeted a woman as he passed, but he had seen no men around; there was a traffic officer at the corner, but there had been no trouble and no commotion. After a long talk, the Superintendent told Mr. Sherman to turn in his badge and key, and to visit the school psychiatrist. Mr. Sherman became excited, said he was going to his lawyer, and exclaimed: "Nobody's gonna psycho me!"

The Superintendent concluded: "In addition to being a confirmed alcoholic (chiefly beer), Mr. Sherman is ignorant, prejudiced, anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, narrow-minded, and of low intelligence. He is not now, and never was, fit to be an attendance officer. I must admit that the supervisors fell down on their job of rating this man."

Mr. Sherman showed the psychiatrist several $20 bank checks

to prove that he was responsible. He boasted of having met Barney Baruch at a Veterans' camp. "Yessiree, Barney Baruch! I says to him, 'Hello Barney!' What ya tink he says to me? He says 'Hello'—an' I give him me name, George; an' Barney Baruch says 'Hello George!' Dat's de kin' o' people I meet up wit all de time."

Mr. Sherman was also aware of the need of proper training in his field. He stated to the psychiatrist: "Dere's been a blast in de papers about social workers. Only so much percent of 'm went to college. You gotta be on de ball dese days, take it from me. You gotta take a lot o' courses." Mr. Sherman himself left high school after 2 years and later took four courses: Compulsory Education Law, Probation Law, Social Service, Methods of Supervision—one term each. Asked about his prejudice, Mr. Sherman snorted: "Me anti-Catholic! Once a Catholic teacher hit a pupil. He give $10 to de boy on a payment for a $50 shakedown. I busted de case wide open. Is dat anti-Catholic? My character is good; let 'em get somebody else!"

Asked what he meant by that last remark, Mr. Sherman replied: "I da' know. I just want a solid report on my mind." The psychiatrist's diagnosis: "Cerebral arteriosclerosis and psychosis with paranoid features." He noted that complaints of Mr. Sherman's abusive ways and vile speech had been filed through more than 15 years.

Mr. George Sherman was retired. It is likely that his own lack of culture (his deficiency) was transformed into a hatred of learning and consequently of those who went to school.

Many inadequate, disagreeable, harmful teachers cause constant worry to their immediate supervisors, but are never brought to the attention of higher officials. It is a function of the principal to cope with such teachers, to remold them into satisfied and satisfactory workers; reporting them to the superintendent might seem a shirking of responsibility or a confession of failure. In

other cases, the supervisors recognize that a teacher exerts a bad influence on her children and should be removed, but she has kept within the letter of the regulations and given them no peg upon which to hang charges. Such teachers may be transferred from school to school, as successive principals feel they have had all they can endure; but, even though transferred into less and less desirable districts, these teachers may cling to their posts until the mandatory retirement age overtakes them. Most such teachers never come to public attention.

Helen Saunders Aguilar is one who did.

Helen was 35, with 13 years of Satisfactory high-school teaching in a southwestern town, when she decided to spend a summer in Paris. Perhaps there, she could forget the classroom grind. Swept away by the free atmosphere of the gay capital, and eager for fresh experience, she found new pleasure in sex.

The third week before her return found Helen in the shop of a fashionable couturier, to order a Parisian dress to take home to America. And there Helen found Philipe. Philipe Aguilar was just 17; he was 6 feet tall, with dark, wavy hair; a promise of new youth and old world romancing.

After a two-day romance, they were sleeping together. His broken English and her fractured French prevented any soul probing, and sufficed for her well-slaked animal needs. How could she give up Philipe for the barren classroom? Helen caught desperate hold of Philipe as a symbol. In him were freshness and freedom. She had to make these a permanent reality in her own days. She sought for some way to hold them.

Philipe's parents were fairly well-to-do; he was studying to be a doctor. Here was her weapon. Helen pictured to Philipe his future as a doctor in France. He would be buried in some grubby provincial town, or caught in a constant struggle against the high prices of Paris. Why not come to America?

"But I can't speak English!" Philipe protested.

"Learn it! With your handsome presence and your personality,

you can make a fortune. You can be a psychoanalyst; you won't have to know too much."

The following Christmas holiday season, Helen went east to Miami, and Philipe flew to join her. They lived in the hotel as man and wife. The third night, there was a knock at the door. A man with a badge and a flashlight burst in. And the bewildered Philipe learned of American morality, as the man demanded to see their marriage certificate and threatened to take them to court.

Helen pointed out to Philipe that a court record would prevent his becoming a doctor; they had better get the papers to straighten things out.

"So that's why you have a paper shortage!" the boy laughed wryly; "Every time a man sleeps with a woman he has to have papers!"

But next day he went with her to a Justice of the Peace, and Helen went back to her home city as Mrs. Aguilar. Years later, during the official questioning, she admitted that the man who had broken in on them was not the hotel detective, but someone she had hired, to snare Philipe into matrimony.

Philipe enrolled in a college in the Middle West. He came to stay with his wife on long week ends and on holidays. She could hardly wait for his arrival, and was jealous of his absent hours. When Helen accused him of sleeping with girls while at college, Philipe just laughed at her jealous questions and her occasional tantrums. The years went by, and he received his bachelor's, then his medical, diploma.

What of Helen's teaching during these years? When she finally came to official attention, the records were checked. They were full of complaints from pupils and their parents.

Once four mothers went together to the district superintendent, to ask that their children be taken out of Mrs. Aguilar's class. He asked the reason.

"She seems to despise the children. She treats them like dirt.

My little girl came home crying the other day. The teacher had screamed at her: 'You little idiot!'

" 'What did you do?' I asked her.

" 'Nothing, Mama. My pencil rolled off the desk.' "

Another mother said: "She gives orders and wants the children to obey like machines. She never has a smile or a kind word. Every morning when my girl has to leave for school, she stamps her foot and cries: 'I hate her! I hate her!' Isn't there *anything* you can do?"

The superintendent visited Mrs. Aguilar's classroom. He felt that everyone perked up when he came in. And the lesson was a good one, he had to admit. The woman drew the answers out of the children; she treated them with almost too effusive kindliness. No doubt she could teach when she put her mind on it.

But what was her mind on when there was no supervisor in her room? In one of her letters, Helen said: "There is soon to be a lung X-ray taken of every teacher, and those suffering from TB will be given a 2-year sabbatical. How I wish I could be among them! Two years of release from prison and slavery!"

Philipe came to the city and set up as a psychoanalyst. With his physique and personality, he was a great success. But he was not so good a psychologist with Helen. When she declared it was time they set up house together, he brushed her off, and cruelly said: "When I lie with you, I feel like I'm going to bed with my grandmother."

Helen's possessiveness by now held as much hate as love, but she was not going to relinquish her prize. She suggested that the Medical Board, to say nothing of the Immigration Authorities, might take a dark view of the circumstances of Philipe's coming to this country. So the Aguilars took an apartment, and in due course they had a daughter.

By the time the girl was 11, Philipe had had enough. He was thoroughly Americanized by then and knew his way around. He went to Nevada to establish residence for a divorce. When the

case came to court Helen, back at school, pleaded illness. Although the school physician found no symptoms, she insisted that she had pains in her throat and must rest.

Mrs. Aguilar carried her application to the Superintendent in charge of personnel. This was his first contact with her. Mrs. Aguilar said she was sick, but added that her husband was very ill, in Nevada, and that she was really too worried to face her class. As her record indicated excellent attendance throughout long and unfailingly Satisfactory service, the Superintendent granted her a 2-weeks leave with pay. She went to Nevada to oppose the divorce and to urge Philipe to come back to her.

When the judge asked how she, a teacher, could take time off from her classes, Helen responded: "Oh, I told them I was sick!" Then, in sudden apprehension, she added: "Is this a public record? I hope I won't lose my job!"

Unable to effect the reconciliation she desired, when her 2 weeks were up Helen went home fuming. And went to her husband's office. Here, among his records, she found his diary.

Philipe was indeed a successful psychoanalyst! In analysis, the patient's trust is at first transferred to the analyst, who uses this trust to guide the patient into appropriate channels. Philipe used it to channel his patients into more intimate action on his couch. His diary was most explicit: married women, girls—some of them no more than 15.

Her fury erupting with volcanic force, Helen sold the diary to the city's tabloid. The tabloid, withholding the patients' names and tidying the language, printed the diary. Although there was no criminal prosecution, because no woman came forward to identify herself, the Medical Association found grounds to revoke Philipe's license. It was at this point that the School Board became aware of Helen Aguilar's history. The Superintendent investigated; Helen was brought up on charges of falsely pleading illness, and was fined 6-months pay.

Philipe, without a profession because of his wife's betrayal, was

more resolved than ever not to go back to her. He pressed for immediate action by the court. His affidavit referred, among its many charges, to "her lascivious conduct, of which she knows I have voluminous evidence in her own written admissions, of intercourse both with adult men and with boys from among her pupils."

Philipe knew that he could not trust his wife, nor ever depend upon her again. He wrote her as much, telling her that nothing now could stop him from getting the divorce. Then Helen shot her final thunderbolt.

She wrote to Philipe: "You love your daughter dearly. Only she's not your daughter. She's the daughter of your best friend, Thomas. Ask Thomas; he won't lie to you."

That night Philipe, whose actions show he was a weak and easily influenced person, put a bullet through his brain.

Helen Aguilar continued to teach. Class after class still went from her, full of resentment and hate. The legal powers of the School Board provided no grounds for dismissing her from the service. Whenever she was observed, she gave a good lesson. There were no flagrant school violations with which she could be charged. The Superintendent wondered what to do. He had her transferred to a problem school, hoping that she would prefer to resign.

Instead, Mrs. Aguilar raged that she was being persecuted. She sought letters from prominent citizens, saying that her treatment was overcruel. She found a story that touched their sympathy, and several wrote in her behalf. Armed with these letters, she appealed to the State Superintendent for retransfer to her old school, and for a refund of the 6-months salary that she had been fined.

After a review of the case, her appeal was denied. At the end of the term, unable to cope with the new conditions, Helen Aguilar retired from teaching.

Helen Aguilar's case came to official attention through the

accident of extraneous publicity. Since persons who hate their work and the children they teach may be nonetheless competent class managers, they are hard to discover, and even harder to remove. The grounds are too tenuous to be sustained in court, or in the hearings properly accorded a teacher to safeguard her from unfair or misinformed attack. Thus, while the teacher is protected, the children come to grief.

While Helen Aguilar's story is not typical, one can only guess how many teachers manage to keep their troubles private while they continue teaching though they hate the work and grow more and more bitter, "taking it out" on the children in their classes, pounding resentment and hate into those young lives. In other fields of work, such persons impinge upon adults, whose greater experience may enable them to cope with the pressures; but such a teacher presses upon young, malleable children deep and lasting harms.

22

From the Teacher's Side

THERE IS STILL QUESTION in psychiatric circles as to the permanency, or even the possibility, of full recovery from mental illness. The vast and varied field is even now in a ferment of proposed palliatives and remedies. The new drugs are reported as already lessening the hospital burden of mental cases, enabling more patients to go back to their former place in the outside world. As, however, many of them must continue taking the drugs, some psychiatrists look upon these released patients as mental counterparts of the diabetic, never recovered but achieving a kind of balance. There is perhaps more hope in the multiple small dose insulin shock treatment combined with psychological therapy. In a 1960 editorial the *New York Times* called the work of Dr. H. Peter Laqueur in elaborating this, the most promising development in the field of mental therapy in the past 30 years. With this treatment, it seems that over 80% of patients treated in the first year are, without the need of renewed treatment or drug dosage, permanently restored to active life in the community.

All such persons who seek to function in the community, however, according to Dr. Nathan Ackerman, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, require "a greater reaching out" on the part of their family and associates. And at once one must ask whether school children can give the understanding and sympathy and helpful easing of strains involved in this "reaching out." If, furthermore,

a person's defenses against the pressures of life have been weakened by mental illness, is that person equipped to fortify the spirit of susceptible and malleable new generations, to sustain them on their hazardous journey in the world?

It might be more presently profitable to ponder some of the reasons victims of "nervous breakdown" or mental illness give, after their return to their normal work, as cause of their collapse. It need hardly be said that the basic cause is within themselves. Others have faced equally trying circumstances unscathed. The same slums surrounded Scar-Face Capone and Carl Sandburg. But the initial inner weakness is played upon by outside forces. These may be regarded as contributing causes. Their mention may, on the other hand, be regarded as a rationalization, as a seizing upon something external to bear the blame for what really lies within. There may nevertheless be some significance in what the teacher selects to mention, as a major contributing element in the breakdown. And it should be illuminating to note what things are blamed.

A comparatively few see the root of the matter in home conditions. Thus Martha Schoop declared:

"I was happy at school; school conditions left nothing to be desired. It was intolerable home conditions that brought me down. My mother is always ill. Let me enumerate: headache, rheumatism, arthritis, sacroiliac, hip-, joint-, finger-, eye-, sinus-, ear-ache; stomach, kidneys, bowels, skin. Every day it was one or the other. Being ill, she naturally cannot do housework or prepare meals. Before I go to school I have to clean the house, make the beds, give my father and mother breakfast. My father is invalided; he says it is his heart, but there is nothing wrong with him. Doctors have examined him thoroughly; he has had an electroencephalogram and an electrocardiograph and all is well; but nothing can convince him that he doesn't have heart trouble. Since he cannot work, I have to provide for the family. When

I get home after a trying day's work I have to shop, prepare dinner and do the thousand and one things incident to housekeeping.

"Then, every two or three weeks, my mother calls the school to have me come home at once; she is dying. At first I used to rush home, only to find that she had a migraine—if indeed she had one—or some other minor ailment. Since I no longer respond to such calls my mother brands me 'selfish,' 'ingrate,' a daughter 'without a heart.' Finally I broke down; the doctor called it 'nervous fatigue.' And strange as it may seem, they got along quite all right without me. Despite her ailment, my mother did the housework and cooked the meals; despite his heart condition, my father went out and shopped. On the advice of my doctor I have taken my own small apartment not far from school, and I see my parents from time to time. I help them financially, and it's amazing how well they manage. It took a breakdown to open all our eyes."

The trouble at home may center not in the parents but in the spouse. Thus Gertrude Greene complained:

"School had very little to do with my breakdown; I ascribe all my difficulties to my husband. I explained this to my principal, but I guess he grew tired hearing about my troubles and I got little sympathy from him. But my husband made a nervous wreck of me. I was so shaken I could not continue in the classroom. I became nervous, depressed, irritable; I could not control my temper. Here are some of the things my husband did:

"1. He was moody, changing from periods of high elation to periods of deep depression. At one moment he would sing and dance and talk gaily; then he would be silent and morose as though he had lost his best friend.

"2. He could not sleep. He tried all sorts of sleeping pills. He kept me awake too, so that I was usually in no fit condition to go to school.

"3. He was always constipated. He went from doctor to doctor, never trying any remedy long enough for it to work. He spends his leisure time on the toilet.

"4. He went on strange diets, so that I had constantly to adjust my shopping, cooking, and eating, to fit his fads.

"5. When he thought he wasn't getting his own way, he would go into a tantrum. He would scream, weep, tear his hair, threaten to disgrace me or to commit suicide.

"Isn't all this enough to drive any woman mad?"

The shoe, of course, may pinch the other sex. Thomas N. Hazlewood exercised greater emotional control in presenting his picture (before he applied for leave):

"After I became principal," he declared, "we bought our own home, in a very good neighborhood. Most of our neighbors were business-men, earning far more than I. My wife suggested that I try to find some extra work, so we could afford some of the luxuries our neighbors enjoyed. I took on some accounting, which occupied all my free time; but the more I earned the more we seemed to need. My wife opened accounts in department stores; bills came tumbling on me like a waterfall. When I spoke to my wife gently, oh, ever so gently about these, she flew into one of her tantrums.

"I worked all summer. This did not satisfy my wife, who remarked that Mr. Nevins was taking his family to Europe; the Minors were completely refurnishing their home. Then she burst out: 'Why in the world did you ever choose teaching as a profession? Here are men with half your brains making four times as much as you do!'

"My mind turns round and round thinking of schemes to earn more money. When I see a happily married couple I envy them. I brood and brood, but can't find any solution. As a young teacher, I used to think that if ever I became a principal, all my ambitions would have been realized. Now I am a principal, and I have never been more wretched. My wife's insatiable yearning for luxuries

has poisoned our lives. She has made our home a terrestrial hell."

There may be no sense of blame attached to the story of unfortunate home conditions, but rather a hopeless regret that life has heaped these troubles upon the suffering teacher. Self-pity hides in the few words that portray the debacle of Ern Brewer, after 17 years of excellent service as a high-school teacher. He had become a confirmed and, what is worse, a willing alcoholic.

"Three years ago," he said, "my wife fell suddenly ill. We called the nearby doctor. He was a pleasant man, a bachelor, about 40. To make a long story short, they fell in love. We were divorced.

"Since that time, everything has been mixed up. I used to be a social drinker. Now I drink to forget. You want me to tell you that I will give up the bottle? That I won't do. I don't drink in school. I don't drink heavily during the week. I may be absent once in a while because of a bad week end, but I give my students a fair break. I give them all I have in me."

By far the greatest number of teachers who indicate external causes for their "nervous exhaustion" name their principal. The principal is an obvious target, and is undoubtedly sometimes blamed as an offender when he is actually doing his duty in an offensive situation. It is clearly harder, however, to pin faults upon a principal than upon a teacher. His position outside the classroom gives him comparative freedom from the immediate pressures felt in front of 40 children, each with a different personality, all clutching at the teacher's attention and concern. Keeping in mind, then, that these criticisms must be taken with several grains of tranquilizer, let us look at some of the charges teachers have leveled at their principals.

The simplest desire of the teacher seems to be for appreciation. "Mr. Tubb never has a kind word to say to his teachers." "When things go right, you never hear a word from Mr. Stone. When they go wrong, the roof comes down." "Mrs. Molloy asked me to

coach the play. I worked hard all term and it was a great success. Mrs. Molloy never even said 'Thank you.' I felt so bad about it my whole summer vacation was spoiled."

Perhaps Mrs. Molloy was hoping for promotion to a superintendency, and wished to take all the credit for herself. She might still have thanked the teacher in private, while smiling modestly to the public praise. Ambition, "the soldier's virtue," may sometimes distort a civilian's view. Thus too "Mrs. Thornblow is a good principal but overambitious. So we have to put on all sorts of shows for which she gets the credit. The public and the school higher-ups, who are invariably 'honored guests,' do not realize what a price we and our pupils pay. We hope that she earns her promotion soon; then we may live again. We pray to be left alone to do our daily chore honestly without interruption and without shows."

More troubling is the principal who makes life uncomfortable by noisy, rude, indiscreet supervision. "Mr. Hampton is a shouter. You can't talk to him quietly; he shouts at you. When he comes into a room, if there is the slightest thing wrong, he shouts his criticism in front of the pupils. If a report isn't in on time, he summons you to his office and shouts. If a child is out of line, he shouts. He even shouts 'Good morning!' when he comes to school. At a conference, if someone ventures an opinion, he shouts it down. At night I find it hard to fall asleep; his shouting rings in my ears."

"For 20 years I was rated Satisfactory and was very happy in my work. The three principals I served under were wonderful, understanding persons. But the new principal, Miss Doty, is something else again. She thinks supervision is fault-finding and the more fault-finding the better the supervision.

"The extent of her fault-finding may be illustrated by these two incidents:

"1. She placed on a bulletin board, which is in full view of pupils and visitors, the following notice: 'Teachers are using al-

together too much toilet paper; pupils do much better in this respect. If teachers don't improve, I shall remove all toilet paper.'

"2. She organized the school in a military hierarchy: privates, corporals, sergeants . . . colonels, generals. Teachers were required to salute all pupils above the grade of sergeant and pupils were directed to report all teachers who failed to salute. Teachers were reported, summoned to the office and threatened with 'discipline.' Fortunately the School Board learned of the pattern, because one morning the principal called a special assembly and announced that because of 'traitors' she was obliged to abandon the splendid military organization of the school."

"Mrs. Hobalt thinks that supervision demands spying. She has organized a supposedly secret spy system; everyone is afraid to talk. That 'look around' before letting a word fall has become characteristic of our school."

Sometimes the principal seems to select a particular victim for bullying. Contrasted with "the teacher's pet" is "the principal's peeve." From many places come the plaints.

"Miss Bone picks out a teacher every year to pick on. Last year I was her victim . . . My colleagues urged me to bide my time; one of them would be the next victim . . . But I couldn't take it, any more than our former assistant principal, whom she drove almost crazy. And I didn't want to be driven to suicide, as was Miss Newstone, by the continuous threats of the principal. There is no doubt in all our minds that Miss Bone is responsible for Miss Newstone's death. If I am sent back to her school, I shall have to resign."

This type of complaint is so widespread that one fuller example may be cited. "For 3 years, I was happy working with Mr. Sorkin. He gave me a third-year class that had had twelve substitutes; when I kept it in order and working, he told me he was grooming me for promotion. Then another teacher took a transfer, and the general conversation at school was: 'Who will be Mr. Sorkin's next victim?' Every year Mr. Sorkin concentrates his 'favorite

sadistic technique' upon one teacher. This year it turned out to be me.

"Mr. Sorkin's favorite times for supervision are 8:40, 11:50, 1:00, and 2:20: as the class is assembling, and just before dismissal. He comes in without a smile, without a greeting to either the teacher or the children. From the doorway he spots one child who doesn't seem to be participating with the rest, and bellows at him. Then he walks across to the window, stands with his back to the radiator, and aims sarcastic remarks at the teacher. His criticism is always negative, always destructive. His remarks are always personal ones, about the teacher's deficiencies. The fact that the room is filled with children and that the children are listening doesn't seem to enter his mind. Perhaps, indeed, he relishes having them hear his abuse of their teacher. Among the many remarks he has flung across the room at me, before the gaping children, are: 'You show absolutely no improvement . . . I don't know why you get paid . . . I can't understand how you ever passed the teaching examination.'

"I spoke to Mr. Sorkin about my taking a transfer. He retorted that I wanted a transfer because I wasn't a good teacher; when—if ever—I became a good teacher, I would not want a transfer. I asked him to give a model lesson, so I could see what he wanted; he replied that *I* was being paid to teach.

"Then I went to the School Board to ask about a transfer. Word of this must have come back to Mr. Sorkin, for on another occasion when I was home because of illness he announced to the teachers that I had gone to the Board. At the next teachers' conference, Mr. Sorkin made a little speech:

"'When I was a little boy I learned about a bird that was a filthy bird. This bird fouled its own nest. Anybody who would talk about her school in derogatory terms is doing a disservice to the community. I don't think anybody has a right to talk about her fellow workers in unfavorable words. There is a terrible name for such a person . . .'

"The next day, Mr. Sorkin asked a colleague friend of mine what my reaction had been to the conference.

"The following month, the assistant superintendent came in to observe my work. Mr. Sorkin's almost daily little visits stopped. He suddenly discovered that I have good manipulative devices in Arithmetic and told two other teachers to drop in and note them. The teachers began to ask 'Who will be Mr. Sorkin's next victim?'

"To indicate how the teachers feel about their principal, I should like to mention that at a recent faculty luncheon for three teachers going on sabbatical leave and one taking a transfer, Mr. Sorkin was left uninvited."

To flatter or to abuse, to bully or to cringe are opposite sides of the same coin. The principal who abuses likes to be praised, as Mr. Sorkin's "victim" recognized: "Of course, I could have gotten along if I had flattered my principal. Many of the faculty did, for, as Machiavelli pointed out, there is only one way to guard against flattery, and that is, to welcome plain speaking. My principal didn't want plain speaking, he wanted flattery thickly applied."

Flattery, however, may come to seem a virtual necessity, the constant feeding of the vanity of a little person in power, to fend off pique and penalties. Often its slime must be made to look like silver, by the further unction of gifts. And any teacher who does not join the sycophantic chorus is *ipso facto* unco-operative and incompetent. Thus "Miss Casper is insatiable for flattery, praise, admiration, and gifts. 'Miss Casper, you look awfully sweet today!' 'That dress fits your personality perfectly; you look gorgeous.' 'That talk on Americanism you gave at yesterday's assembly was marvelous.' 'You are a paragon of modesty.' 'You have 61 teachers, but we have you.' The truth is, as we all know, that Miss Casper is neither sweet, nor gorgeous, nor marvelous, nor modest, nor unique.

"And her demands! Flowers on her birthday, flowers on the

anniversary of her licensing as principal, flowers on the anniversary of her appointment. I don't mean a simple corsage or bouquet; I mean wreaths costing at least $30. Not to mention individual gifts: a bathrobe, gloves, a dozen pairs of stockings, expensive French perfumes. Miss Casper whispered to one of her favorites that a diamond ring was pleasant to receive; a collection was made and she was given a ring with a 2½-carat diamond. The School Board somehow had word of this; Miss Casper returned the ring; it was sold, at a profit of $200. But the money went into the school 'Teachers' Welfare Fund,' which is used mainly to keep flowers in the principal's room.

"Meanwhile Miss Casper always keeps one teacher in torment, to remind the others that though she may purr she also has fangs. Of late, I was her chosen victim. Every day she came in, to make some nasty comment in front of the class. 'Your plan book is nothing to crow about . . . Your assembly program was a feeble joke . . . Don't you ever change your bulletin board? Your room is the most untidy in the school . . . Your voice irritates your children . . . Your discipline is disintegrating my school.'

"How long can one take such abuse? Every day she had me weeping in front of the class. Then I began to spend sleepless nights. The doctor said I was suffering from a menopausal syndrome. It wasn't. It was just unhappiness caused by a principal of little understanding who should never have been licensed—a vain, immodest, ill-tempered virago who thrives on false praise."

The school situation is still harder to bear when the centrifugal abuse and centripetal flattery radiate around not a principal but a surrogate—especially a clerk. Scores of complaints from dozens of schools emphasize such a malfunctioning. "My school has a principal but no head." Sometimes there is a strong suspicion, or knowledge, that the reigning favorite is the principal's *amie*. In other cases, the principal has more innocently or idiosyncratically retired into a play world or a dream world, which he does not

want disturbed. Such was the world of Dr. Kellogg, who lived in a knightly past, while his clerk carried on the daily routine. One morning Dr. Kellogg pressed the desk bell. The monitor came, and the Doctor, in medieval mood, cried, "Boy, fetch me a minion!" A boy came in, and was asked to water the plants along the office window. But there came another boy, and another, and by the time the tenth boy arrived, Dr. Kellogg was aware that minion (minyan), to monitor Abie Cohen, meant a quorum for religious service.

Such an episode made little dent in Dr. Kellogg's day-long delight in reading English history while his clerk undertook to run the school. She is still carrying on the functions of the principal.

Some clerks, unfortunately, are not content with the honor thrust upon them; they have to exert usurped authority, to make it clear who is the boss.

"Mr. Putnam didn't run the school; his clerk did, and all of us had to cater to her. She was commonplace, without culture, and deeply prejudiced. She liked only her own kind and boasted about it. Mr. Putnam is a simple-minded easy-going man, who has seen his best days. He is quite out of reach. The clerk makes all appointments, opens all letters, rates all teachers, and on most of them vents her spleen.

"The clerk thinks me highbrow and uppish; I have continued to take courses after school. Whenever I send down a disciplinary case, which I do quite seldom, she sends back a note—signed by the principal—reading 'What are you paid for?' Somebody ought to send such a note to him.

"The so-called monthly conference has been made a frustrating farce by Mr. Putnam. All he does is read notices from the Superintendent or the School Board. When I had the temerity to suggest that there be a program for the conferences, Mr. Putnam broke his pattern and made a speech. He said: 'I have been principal of this school for 30 years and the school has a good reputation. I don't like new-fangled ideas like the Activity Program.

That program is all right for Soviet Russia. It is anti-religious and anti-American. Any teacher who doesn't like it here can get a transfer. We don't want any Communists here.'

"After the meeting I went to Mr. Putnam's office. The clerk wanted to know why I wished to speak to the principal. I told her it was none of her damned business, walked straight into the inner office, told Mr. Putnam he would listen to me whether he liked it or not, and let him know what the whole school thought of him and his clerk.

"From his office, I went to the district superintendent's. A hearing was held, and the clerk was transferred to another school. But I was so broken up by the nervous strain that I was out of school for 6 months."

Mr. Putnam, temporarily bestirring himself a bit, is still the principal, with four more somnolent years to serve before he reaches mandatory retirement age.

If it is hard to dislodge a disagreeable or inefficient principal, it is even more difficult to remove an unfit superintendent. The wiser course is never to appoint such a person. But how can those who appoint be sure? And what of the heavy hand of political pressure? There is, even now in one northeastern city, a City Superintendent of Schools who has been dismissed from two other such posts, and who is continuing to serve while fighting to keep out of the courts a morals charge against him involving another male.

Then there is Lucky Lou Martin who, at 60, seemed really to deserve the promotion to assistant superintendent. He was a hard-headed, practical, commonsensible man. He married a fellow teacher whose father was reputed to be wealthy. He cut a figure in the community. As a principal, he had a good reputation, a sense of humor. He used to say of himself, "I'm homespun stuff."

The principals in his district and his new associates thought him a good choice, a solid citizen, financially beyond reach of

political or personal considerations, of whom the district and the city might be proud. Only the school psychiatrist, who had not been consulted, murmured disagreement: "It's a bad choice, bad for Lou, bad for the principals, bad for the schools and the city."

The story was set down by one of the principals in Lucky Lou Martin's district: "After 3 months, jingles began to appear, scrawled on the walls, typed and dropped in the office. One of these ran:

He's a martin- et;
How bad can one get?
Before you're let out,
Martin, *get* out!

"He didn't get out, and he wasn't let out until, after 10 mournful years, he reached the age of mandatory retirement. During that time, he undermined the health of several of us by his petty, selfish, sadistic, suspicious, vain, foolish, tyrannical ways, and his flares of wild wrath in response to the most trivial stimuli.

"What traits of character produced the 10-year debacle?

"1. Lou deeply resented suggestions. They represented a challenge to his omniscience and a threat to his authority. He therefore never admitted a mistake nor abandoned an untenable position. He encountered suggestions for improvements with such squelches as 'Where did you get that crackpot idea?' or 'All this progressive stuff is the bunk.' When he'd had a glass too much, as was frequent after lunch, he would say bluntly, 'That's plain shit!'

"2. His moods were kaleidoscopic. One principal always told her beads before seeing him. Others more practically asked his clerk 'How's Lou feeling today?' But that mattered little. One wrong word or gesture, an innocent remark, would send him from smiling good humor into a frenzy of rage; his face would grow purple, anything in his hand would be hurled across the room. Blasphemy, filthy phrases, would pour from his mouth, heedless of the presence of women.

"3. He was conceited and boastful. Even more than he resented

criticism, he adored praise. As he neared 70 and a successor was mentioned, he declared: 'They'll have to search the world to find someone to equal me and I'm not kidding.' The tragedy is that he was not 'kidding.'

"4. He never had a good word to say of the principals in his district. He swept them aside in such terms as: 'Smart but lazy. Cleverly claims credit for other peoples' work . . . No sense of organization. Should have stayed in his old job, but he wasn't fit for that either . . . Can't make soup out of this garbage.' But to the principals directly, especially when in his cups, he oozed camaraderie: 'Bill, I don't know what I'd do without you.' 'Come on, Tad, you know I like you. Have another drink.'

"5. He was undependable. His word, his assurance, meant nothing. He could look you straight in the eye and deny what he had solemnly promised a day, an hour, before. When he seemed caught, with his suave plausibility he could crawl around any lie.

"6. Lou had neither philosophy of education nor personal convictions. He could deal with concrete things; ideas were foreign to him. He shifted his attitude toward the Activity Program, for instance, as the winds of opinion blew. When it finally won wide acceptance, he rushed to take applause for the plan he had not conceived, promoted, or executed, or for that matter, understood.

"7. He neither possessed nor respected scholarship. He did not associate with thinkers or persons of culture. Speaking of him to an informal group of principals, one of my colleagues observed: 'Blessed are the half-educated, for they become superintendents.'

"8. He could not accept responsibility, except for success. When any measure failed, he shifted the blame onto other shoulders. In the eyes of the principals under him, this weakness in Lou's character was most grievous.

"9. He fawned upon the powerful, but treated others with disdain, indifference, or contempt. He feared anyone with power, but respected only the powerful who were white, Protestant, and wealthy.

"10. He lacked human sympathy. He derived pleasure from the mental anguish of teachers and principals who came before him for minor infractions of the rules. He vented upon his subordinates the spleen and fury generated in him by the domination of his virago of a wife, who pulled the purse strings and made him jump at home.

"11. Lou had a 'lady friend' and took no pains to hide her. If you met him with her at a restaurant, you might be embarrassed, but not Lou. Soon aspirants for promotion learned that the way up was via Molly Oshun's skirts. While some sought to curry favor with Lou's favorite, others again expressed their resentment in private talk or in lampoon."

For 10 years Lou Martin ruled the district roost. However revolting his conduct, there was no open revolt. He never opened himself to the possibility of formal charges, and only when some principal or other sufferer was pushed beyond control was there more than murmured complaint. Finally he reached retirement age, and without the usual farewell party, slipped from the educational scene.

The principal's comment continues: "About a year after his retirement, Lucky Lou confided to a former colleague met by chance: 'No, I can't complain. I'm well-fixed and in fairly good health. But there's one thing I can't understand. After all I did for those principals and the whole district, I might just as well not be alive. Not a soul ever writes me so much as a Christmas card, or reaches out a hand to lift the telephone. I always thought they were a bunch of ingrates; now I know it!'

"His colleague refrained from remarking that those who did not hold him in contempt had pity on him as a sorry case of senile deterioration. But they all blamed the spineless School Board for having let him remain in service so long."

The quotations in this chapter are a very few cullings from the hosts of complaints about conditions that helped bring on attacks of "nervous exhaustion," "nervous breakdown," and other spells

of emotional or mental affliction. They were all written by persons sufficiently recovered to return to their school work. They were, therefore, set down by presumably clear-headed persons, looking back over a past period of disturbance to seek its cause. While they are naturally subjective and even biased, they are the only form of direct statement on the subject one can secure. And there is reason for pondering in the fact that a great majority lay stress upon the lack of understanding, the lack of leadership, the lack of warmth and human kindliness, in their supervisor. When the seniors of a large and noted high school, at their graduation exercises, loudly boo their own principal, there would seem to be something seriously wrong. No steps were taken, in that situation, to survey the faculty feeling and facts about the man. As has been said earlier, supervisors seem so strongly entrenched in their posts that constant complaints and even general awareness of their unfitness do not suffice to move them out; only a public scandal seems able to effect their retirement before the mandatory age.

In the supervisor, too, it must be recognized that these unbecoming or harmful actions are not gratuitous; they are the consequences of deeper and perhaps unconscious drives. The overly ambitious principal may be compensating for a childhood during which he was denied appreciation; the indifferent supervisor, who leaves his work mainly to his clerk, may have been, in his childhood, overtaxed or pressed by too great parental hopes and expectations. In a spiraling return of cause and effect, the present supervisor may have been started on the wrong track by an unfit teacher, while himself a pupil in school.

The teacher, likewise, may bear scars from her own student-day contact with teachers. But whatever the basic or contributing cause of her mental breakdown, the suffering reaches out and at once affects the child. The teacher's trouble is a stone dropped into the water of her class; the circles of disorder widen until every child is disturbed.

23

A Teacher Complains

AT THE TIME of World War II, one New York teacher who had recovered from "nervous exhaustion" and was asked on returning to the classroom to tell the cause of his breakdown, went to the secretary of his professional organization. This official, in a lengthy letter, pressed home the strains and burdens under which the teachers were laboring. Some of those strains have been mentioned in the Introduction to this book. It should be illuminating to examine such conditions in the caustic words of a spokesman for the overtasked teacher. These conditions have not, in the main, improved since the end of the War.

The tone of the letter is manifestly hostile to the school supervisors and administration. Its points, nevertheless, are pressed cogently, and should be impartially weighed. Only part of the 34-page letter is quoted here:

"After years of subservient, cringing service, the 'ill teacher' is naturally not going to send a reply that will conflict with her fostered fear of lèse-majesté against the sacrosanct school officials. In other words you won't get the truth, and as far as that goes we think you don't really want the truth. The great majority of replies will be noncommittal. They will let you know what you want to believe, namely, as you have smugly noted, that they became ill on account of additional home burdens imposed by the War, illness of members of the family, absence of husbands, anxiety and sorrow for those taken by the War. To you and your associates such explanations will seem delightfully 'realistic' and

when you 'integrate' and 'evaluate' them in terms of a 'frame of reference,' your 'shared thinking' will come out with a perfectly ducky tight alibi for yourselves. In this too rapidly 'changing world' one could hardly expect you to change your 'basic concepts.'

"If the War has anything to do with the nervous illness of teachers, you and your colleagues must suspect that its influence is merely incidental. Anyone acquainted with groups of New York City teachers soon senses that their resentment, antagonism, dissatisfaction, frustration, bitterness, which are the real causes of nervous exhaustion and other types of mental illness, are due to matters closer than the War—in fact as close as the School Board, the Board of Superintendents, and the Superintendent of Schools. I expect nothing from these. The School Board is somewhat less than mediocre, the Board of Superintendents is on approximately the same level, and the Superintendent of Schools is the supreme exemplar of mediocrity.

"If you were capable of being honest and truly realistic, you would rightly attribute the illness to your:

1. Policies,
2. Principals and Assistant Superintendents,
3. Parents,
4. Philosophy.

The earliest English farce was *The Four P's;* this latest condition, induced by your four P's, would be farcical were it not that the future of our children is at stake.

"Your policies and principals go hand in hand, in making the local teaching profession repulsive. First of all, you have permitted and encouraged the practice of handling your teachers in a way that you wouldn't dare to treat the cooks in your private kitchens. If you constantly interfered with the work of your cooks as you do with your teachers', the cooks would throw you out of the kitchens by the napes of your sacred necks or would quit their

jobs and leave you high and foodless. Unfortunately for the teachers, you have a bureaucratic monopoly on teaching jobs and thus they don't dare to react like cooks. So they take in silence what you and your principals dish out to them until it becomes so intolerable that they crack under the strain.

"As one example of your treatment, you have conveniently ignored the fact that teachers are actually professionals, who have attained their positions only after years of study and preparation. This point may be too slight and subtle for your one-track minds, but teachers are just as much entitled to dignified professional respect and consideration as lawyers, nurses, physicians. But whereas these professionals after a short period of probation become full-fledged independent lawyers, nurses, and physicians, immune from the meddling whims of any other individuals, the teachers after graduation from accredited courses of study and practice, after passing rigid examinations and after several years of probation, are still, according to your supervising practice, nothing but a bunch of dumb dopes and morons. As such they are subject to continuous, totally unnecessary criticism and correction from officious, bureaucratic, dictatorial, autocratic martinets, who after all are nothing more than over-glorified teachers . . .

"Not only are the classroom teachers, by the regulations, subjected to several 'observations' a term by their head of department or assistant principal, but at any odd time the subject supervisor, or the high holy principal himself, may drop in to check on the otherwise loafing, shirking, and incompetent teacher. Only the constant expectation of a surprise visit, so the official thinking seems to run, can keep the slipshod, negligent, indifferent, and slovenly teachers up to snuff . . .

"Now besides subjecting your already fully qualified teachers to this nonsensical and humiliating faking 'improvement' hokum during school hours, your School Board has also assumed an unwarranted proprietary claim over their time after school hours.

Continuing this alleged improving and enriching process, teachers are peremptorily commanded to use their off hours to attend endless conferences and meetings that are no more than supervisor monologues on squaring the circle.

"For their first 13 years the teachers, in order to get their salary increments, must attend 'alertness' courses, as you quaintly call them—have you ever attended any, or noted the topics they include? But this requirement lacks even the alertness and logic of its own design; otherwise, you would impose such courses not upon teachers in their first dozen years, when they are presumably young, fresh, and still with tatters of the high ideals they brought to teaching; but you would order them *after* a dozen years of teaching, as 'refresher' courses for teachers battered and blasé. Thus, too, you could give oldtimers some smattering of and possibly—if you can find it—some *raison d'être* for the new trends and methods your whimsical philosophy drives you, every decade or so, to impose upon the children.

"You and your associates, instead of assuming responsibility for one standard of technique in teaching, have permitted over 700 standards of over 700 principals to be foisted upon, to humiliate and to harass, the teachers. Many a hapless teacher has been compelled by show-off, finicky principal A to change all the methods and practices she was taught at her accredited training school, only to be told at a later date by opinionated, twaddling principal B that principal A is utterly wrong and out-of-date in his theories, that only the B method is correct, up-and-coming, 'purposeful,' and 'progressive.'

"Each little martinet paints the lily and pretends to believe it possible to improve and enrich—by dosages, not by experience—the qualified teachers. One principal long held high his school motto: 'Always the best and then I shall better the best.' This is both bad English and silly logic, matching the old Irish bull that single misfortunes always come in droves, and the greatest calamity is always followed by one greater. Alas, such troubles follow the teacher in droves! . . .

"As though all the encroachments upon her free time, and on the little energy left the teacher, were not enough, you have recently without so much as a by-your-leave generously ordered the teachers, under duress, to 'volunteer' to handle without the slightest extra compensation the giving out of ration cards for the U.S. government. The teachers are the only patriots in America whose time and services are farmed out like those of the old Negro slaves in the South or the serfs in Europe.

"During the late strike of the school custodians, we all witnessed how city officials delicately arranged to have *garbage collectors* act as strike breakers on 4 hour shifts *at double pay*. Civic-minded election clerks and court room jurors receive fees for their time and their work, but mere chattel school teachers are donated by you, to prove to the world how deep is your patriotism. The point of this is not that the teachers want fees for their services, but that they resent being handled thus arbitrarily according to your dictates and not their own free choice. Teachers are every whit as patriotic as philosophers, election clerks, jurors, or garbage collectors . . .

"The essence of the foregoing is that there is not another profession or occupation whose members are subject to this protracted and belittling process of alleged 'improvement' and to such callous handling. Either a teacher is a teacher—a member of the teaching profession—or she is not. You ought to make up your minds one way or the other and have the garbage collectors take away your 'improvement' ideas. Who ever heard of anyone's ordering the 'improvement' of a lawyer, a physician, a plumber, Dr. James Conant, Mrs. Roosevelt, or the philosophers of your School Board?

"Perhaps you don't believe it, but the improvement process is an unnecessary grind that adds to the discontent and contributes to the mental disturbances that prevail among the teachers.

"Next on the list comes the fact that teachers are not allowed to devote their full school time to teaching. Almost a lion's share of their time is impressed by the various statistical departments of

your School Board. There is an overwhelming demand upon the teachers for examination reports, IQ reports, health reports, pupil banking reports, attendance reports, inventories, plan books, logs, and countless other statistical concerns. In this unending stream of clerical work, not only are the teachers required to create or dig up the information, but they must use up hours of additional time to sort and classify and divide and subdivide the figures, to calculate percentages, to verify whether there are 32 7/10 or 36⅝ children in each classroom on a rainy Thursday . . .

"Thus far, we have merely gone into slight detail regarding your policies and principals. Next add your mischievous practice of having parents meddle in school affairs, and you reach another potent reason why teachers go mad. The giant intellects at Teachers College have spread the belief among some parents that teachers are merely servants and are to be looked upon as supernursemaids for their children.

"In fact it was 'Doctor' John K. Norton who emphasized: 'School is a respite for the *almost unbearable situation* of having the mother and child in practically constant contact for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.' Isn't that just terrible for the poor mother! Then you philosophers at the School Board have frequently broadcast the view that 'progressive education takes account of the fact that human growth means harmonious development of the *whole child*—his mental, physical, and emotional life.' In other words, the parents are to be relieved of their own sacred duties and responsibilities, and the 'almost unbearable situation' is to be loaded onto the shoulders of the idle and too highly paid teachers.

"The impression is quite prevalent, as evinced in the attitude of many a PTA, that the schools belong to the parents because they pay the taxes. But the schools belong to the whole community, parents or not, and oddly enough teachers pay taxes too. There is no valid reason why parents by their meddlesome participation should seek to run the schools. Teachers are, after all and despite your unending din and fuss about 'improvement,' trained

specialists in education. The overwhelming majority of parents are no more qualified to participate in the running of a school than they are to run a hospital or the U.S. Treasury. Teachers do not need or want the advice and directives of officious parents, and should be protected from outside interference with school work, just as your School Board members are protected from the public (and the teachers) by your secretaries.

"Thanks to your insidious propaganda, ignorant mothers come to the belief that once they have delivered their offspring to the waiting world their responsibility ends, and the teacher takes over the total child—his education, his nutrition, his sanitation, his morals, and his manners. This attitude is well caught in an episode of one recent Saturday morning. A mother was pushing a baby carriage that held her latest gift to humanity. Alongside her trudged a male brat, aged 10. He was scuffling his feet as he walked, and his dear mother was exasperated by his 'self-expression.' She was heard to exclaim: 'I told you over and over again to stop scraping your feet. I don't see why they don't have school on Saturdays!'

"Oddly enough, the moment a teacher becomes annoyed with the same brat and attempts to correct and discipline him, the doting mother is at the principal's neck crying bloody murder about democracy, the rights of the child, tolerance and autocracy, and by her hollering she brings into the limelight your inarticulate superintendent and School Board and your public relations minions.

"As one teacher wrote: 'The present course of study has absorbed subjects that 10 years ago belonged exclusively to the home: in school today we teach children table manners, home planning, tap dancing, family relations, hobbies, social conversation, movie appreciation. We have diluted subject matter to make way for socialization and guidance . . . Teachers cannot carry the unwieldy double load of home and classroom and do justice to either. We spread too much material too thin. We teach less

and less about more and more. And ethical standards, between the two stools of classroom and home, fall to the mire.'

"Another contributing cause of the teachers' mental and emotional disturbance is your 'philosophy.' Standing on its head every decade or so, it is currently concentrated in your Progressive Education Program, alias the Activity Program, alias the New Program, alias The Program. About the last straw in this camel-load is your Curriculum Mill, euphemistically called Curriculum Division, presided over by a confused, tortured, lost soul, who speaks and writes (God save the mark!) a curious ungrammatical language employing highfalutin' terms to conceal the paucity of thought. This man is always busy, always preoccupied. He never walks, he scurries; he never talks, he pontificates. His arms are never unencumbered with pamphlets, mimeographed materials, heavy tomes. He is the philosopher of the school system. Is it any wonder that our teachers are worried, confused, and frustrated? . . .

"We recognize that not all mental illness stems from the causes thus far laid bare. The basic causes of mental illness even your learned School Board does not know, since despite extensive research and study psychiatrists have not been able to pin them down. But we think it would help if you apply yourself to study the relation between emotional strain and financial stress and try to secure adequate salaries for teachers; if you seriously come to grips with the problems of the selection of inspired professional leaders; if you give vital leadership to your smug and pedantic Board of Examiners (ah, yes, it would be a major achievement to rouse that sanctimonious body out of its lethargy!); if you establish two-way communication, so that teachers could 'tell' you instead of having you 'tell' teachers all the time. You might be surprised at the funds of wisdom in the teachers . . .

"But we know you won't take any of these first steps. So perhaps, things being what they are, the best solution would be to adopt the good old American policy of laissez faire, which

translated means 'You mind your business and I'll mind mine.'

"Think this over, and figure out the rest by yourselves, on this frame of reference . . ."

Buried in this diatribe are many matters that call for careful consideration. The teacher is too seldom consulted as to the teacher's problems.

Conclusion

WHAT SHALL WE DO about the mentally disturbed teacher? Let it be noted that the use of "we" in the sentence above is not intended to mark the afflicted teacher as some different, opposed, inimical or shameful "they." They, but for the grace of God, are we. Arthritis, a broken arm, cancer, schizophrenia, an airplane crash: who shall say which of us is to be stricken, which immune? The problem is one of mutual concern; those who are still well must pool their resources with the sick.

Before one can do more than scrape away at the surface of the problem, two attitudes of the general public must be changed. One of these is the public refusal to look squarely at the general problem of mental disease. The other is the public refusal to give more than lip service to the fact that education is of primary and basic importance to the future welfare of our land.

This book has already indicated the pervasive sense of shame felt by those whose relatives are afflicted by mental illness, as though there were some special disgrace in an ailment because it strikes not just the body but the mind. It has been mentioned how that senseless sense of shame is catered to, in reports of educational systems, by the failure to discriminate between mental and physical disability. Not yet emphasized, however, is the fact that this feeling of shame and the consequent shrinking from the mentally ill further hamper the attempts of doctors to cope with the disease, and indeed contribute to its aggravation. This is a case where ignorance is a blister on the social hygiene.

In a 1959 study for the National Association for the Advancement of Science, *Rehabilitation of the Mentally Ill,* Dr. Robert C. Hunt observes that the initial mental disability in the patient is further increased by the customs and attitudes of our culture, "compounded of lack of understanding, misconceptions as to the nature of mental illness and the behavior of the mentally ill, anxiety about supposed dangers, and intolerance of those who deviate from the norm . . . I propose for discussion the concept that these attitudes lead to rejection and extrusion of the deviant individual; that this extrusion deprives the individual of the opportunity to develop and exercise skills; that this results in failure to develop skills and in atrophy of skills already possessed; and that this loss of skills for living constitutes an artificially produced disability." In addition to this extra handicap society places upon the mentally ill, Dr. Hunt cites further sources of externally added harm: "Commitment to the state hospital continues, in most cases, to represent to the patient and to his family major social surgery by 'putting him away.' At best it is likely to be a regretful acceptance of permanent loss, with family readjustments that make it difficult to reverse the process. The machinery for bringing about the admission, especially in the larger cities, does nothing to mitigate this. The police ambulance, the rapid impersonal processing in a huge psychopathic hospital, the judicial proceedings, and the mass transportation to a remote fortress must seem to many like a casting out of the unfit."

A widespread and forceful campaign might waken the public consciousness and the public conscience to a startled recognition of the harm its attitude is bringing about. By refusing to face the unfortunate facts we multiply them.

The situation presents a parallel to the public attitude, not many years ago, in regard to venereal disease. Once, you may hardly remember, "syphilis" and "gonorrhea" were terms whispered if uttered at all; they named diseases that marked one as beyond the pale of respectable society. Brought into the flush

of full attention by a vigorous campaign against VD, they were reported without concealment or shame, examined and studied objectively, reduced to their proper status as two among many human afflictions—and cured.

The same approach might have similar results in the field of mental illness. Even with the lack of general attention and the consequently small funds now available, promising forward steps are being made, both in controlling some types of mental illness by the use of drugs, and in counteracting them by such treatments as the multiple-small-dose insulin coma combined with psychological and social therapy. Families of those hospitalized are being taught proper attitudes toward the affliction. But, considering that half of all hospital beds in this country are occupied by the mentally ill, pitifully little is being done compared to the greatness of the need; and virtually no attention is being paid, on a nation-wide scale, to the problem of changing the public attitude.

There are beginnings. One of a series of large advertisements of the December 1960 fund-raising drive of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York was headed: *You can't put mental illness out of your mind!* It gave a full newspaper column to the complexity and seriousness of the problem, and a second column to the steps being taken, ending with the thought that your contribution adds to "the strength and hope you give *yourself* if mental illness should ever become a reality in your own family." Such an approach must be multiplied, with major stress on a sound and sane public attitude toward mental illness.

But the "beginnings" are deplorably small. The most recent report of the National Health Association, compiled in 1959, gives the following figures expended by voluntary health agencies: For every reported case of polio, "the President's disease," $216.84 is being spent for research; for every person being treated for cancer, $13.59 for research; for every person hospitalized for mental illness, $.01 for research! Public indifference could not be more clearly marked.

In the history of VD, government agencies and private Foundations combined to fight ignorance and prejudice, so that knowledge might triumph. For similar progress in the battle against mental illness, a public campaign is essential. Its first objective should be the removal of the family sense of guilt and shame when a relative is afflicted, and the recognition that mental illness, though it strikes differently, is nonetheless a disease, to be faced not covertly but courageously, and to be conquered by proper study and treatment. The light of research must burn away the mists of ignorance, shame, and fear.

The general problem of mental illness concerns the entire public, as a phase of our national health that undermines both our financial and our intellectual resources. We are spending huge sums to maintain the afflicted ones—half of all hospital costs—and at the same time we are losing the intellectual and spiritual power of hundreds of thousands of our citizens. Mental illness strikes without favor at the sensitive and the intelligent; it is by no means the moron that swells the ranks of our mentally ill. Problems of physical health affect the manpower of the nation; problems of mental health affect the brainpower.

When the special problem of the mentally disturbed teacher is considered, another aspect of public concern complicates the situation. For while most persons will agree that education is basic to the proper growth of the nation and that our future position in the world depends upon the way in which we rear and train our children, the same persons are strangely apathetic in the face of the current facts.

As a visiting English scholar sees the American situation, in the October 21, 1960 issue of *The Spectator:* "Though faith in the uplifting power of education remains undimmed, the tools with which it is performed are sadly tarnished."

There is wider sweep in the observations of Ambassador M. C. Chagla of India to the American Association of State Universities, just after our 1960 elections: "It is a most dangerous sign of the

times that scientific education has gone so far ahead of the study of the humanities. There is more and more a tendency to neglect and downgrade a study of those subjects which give a young man certain values, certain standards to which he should adhere throughout the storms and stresses of life . . .

"Now that the election is over I can say a word about the issue of American prestige which played such a big part in the debate between the two contestants. I found to my amazement that the question of prestige revolved around the rate of material production. Is this really what leads to the prestige of a country or a nation? I should have thought that prestige depends upon the quality of education, the state of art and culture, the intellectual atmosphere in a country. These things are not shown in production figures, and yet these are the things that make a country great . . .

"It is a sad reflection that although our arms and armaments increase everywhere and we never think twice of improving their quality and are prepared to spend whatever may be necessary, the same criterion is not applied to education. The greater the threat of war, the more the increase in conflicts and tensions, the more vital it is to improve the quality of education."

These two statements by concerned foreigners are representative of thoughtful opinion. The fact remains that, in the United States, the teaching profession offers neither prestige nor pay enough to attract the best young minds and spirits to the guidance of our youth.

Mothers, who presumably are concerned with the upbringing of their children, look upon the schools as a 6-hour-a-day relief; at best, they give lip service to education while spending more on their lipstick and perfume than for their children's schooling. There are, of course, many deeply regardful mothers, just as there are many truly devoted teachers. Unfortunately, the problems are created by the others. Concerned suburban parents have remarked that, in the eyes of their mink-coated neighbors on

their way to the golf course, the teacher's main function is to take the children off their hands.

The business of a teacher is to teach. It hardly seems part of the educator's function to educate the public as to the importance of education. Somehow, however, the heads of government must face this initial and basic problem. It is a pity that, in quarrels as to states' rights *versus* federal obligations, in jugglings and manipulations to sustain regional prejudices, the well-being of the children and therefore of the country often drops out of sight.

It may be that the special prestige the teacher once enjoyed is imaginary; in all times there are tales of the pedagogue despised. In Scotland at the turn of the last century, the headmaster of Summerhill remembers, "the families of manufacturers, lawyers, even shopkeepers, did not accept the son of a schoolmaster as an equal." Perhaps, too, the desire for such prestige rests on a false assumption. It may be argued that in a democracy equal dignity should abide in every man, no matter what his labor. Whether he work in the vineyards of California or in the vineyards of the Lord, let him do his best and he is as good as his neighbor. This granted, the fact remains that one is entitled to the rewards of good labor. The main rewards of good work are proper recognition and proper pay. Neither of these is accorded the teacher.

Recognition of one's good work is essential to the sense of accomplishment, the buoyancy of the ego, that fortify a person's well-being and sustain his satisfaction in his job. Such a satisfaction leads to high morale, to self-respect and respect for one's vocation. This esprit de corps, this high regard for one's profession, this enjoyment of teaching, if it comes to permeate the teachers of the land, will do more to recruit effective young men and women for the profession than all the campaigns now urged.

The need for teachers is obvious, for eager and enthusiastic young spirits to enter the career of educating the nation's children. Thus there are proposals: "We should intensify the drive

to have more and better students turn to the teaching profession." "We should have more men teachers, to keep the masculine influence from vanishing. The young need to feel the interest of men as well as women."

Yet such drives are doomed to failure, without the prior conditions of success—the incentives of proper recognition and proper pay.

How can one increase the teacher's sense of accomplishment, and therefore her enjoyment of her work? At present the excellent and the mediocre, the devoted conscientious teacher whose soul is in her classroom and the shrewd indifferent one who "goes through the motions," find the same *Satisfactory* on their record, year after year. Classroom work tends to become routine, stale, then stagnant. Many an adult has visited an old teacher, to find things going on in the classroom precisely as they were 25 years ago. There are even the same exercises, the same sentences, on the blackboard. The chosen few, in whom there is an abiding love of children, continue to do devoted work. The great majority do their job well, as a matter of course. But the "matter of course" does not suffice for the country's need. Ways must be found of imbuing the teachers with a continuing sense of accomplishment and professional growth. There must be constant quest for and encouragement of new ideas as well as of work well done. Ways of public recognition should be sought for quietly devoted service. The best work is not necessarily done by those who take the limelight. All meritorious teachers should be made aware that their worth is known.

The principal who, at graduation one year, asked his teachers to stand, and then asked the parents present to applaud them for a year of excellent and devoted service, not only astounded his faculty but gave a decided lift to their morale.

Teachers enjoying, and thriving in, their work not only will shed the light of their own fulfillment upon the children, but will also act as magnets to attract more goodly spirits into the teaching field.

In addition to proper recognition and the attendant sense of well-being, teachers require adequate pay.

There is no need for lengthy argument on the subject of better pay. The general point is clear, that the salary offered a teacher, both the initial salary and even more the maximum—too low and reached after too long a period of service—does not suffice to attract to the profession the best qualified and most worthwhile of young Americans entering upon their life's work. There is a basic and urgent need of better pay for teachers.

The atrociously low level of teacher's salaries is caught in a blunt figure by Simon Ramo in *Teaching Machines and Programmed Learning,* a source book issued in 1960 by the National Education Association. Are the new teaching devices expensive? he asks. Then he imagines an ancient Pharaoh putting the same question if it were suggested that he build the pyramids with bulldozers and steamshovels instead of thousands of slaves. "So we would figure it all out and discover that it would cost him much more if he changed to the machines, *because he paid his slaves so little.*" Teachers today are paid so little that automatons would cost more! Incidentally, they are paid less than the bricklayers and other no-longer-slaves who build the pyramiding skyscrapers of our time.*

Beyond the general question of proper wages, however, there are problems that call for examination. In many school systems

* Permit just one more indication of the inequity. "Look at the case of Jack," say Max L. Hutt and Robert G. Gibby in *The Mentally Retarded Child* (1958); "Jack had been in a special class for retarded children for a period of approximately ten years. At the age of nineteen he secured a job in a steel mill working on a machine that processed pipe. He was a very friendly boy, an industrious worker, and interested in his job. Within a period of one year he had been promoted to foreman of his group, and in this capacity was well liked and accepted by his co-workers. He had an intelligence quotient on the Stanford-Binet of 74, and his scholastic achievements were commensurate with his intellectual level. (Incidentally, Jack's salary as foreman was higher than that of his former special class teacher.)" There is no question that Jack's position and salary strengthened his morale. What of the morale of the teacher?

the policy of equal pay is widespread and firmly intrenched. In New York City, for example, kindergarten, elementary, junior high and senior high school teachers all receive the same salary, men and women are paid the same amount, wherever in the city schools they teach.

Two questions rise. They are merely presented here; no answer to them is sought in these pages.

The first is the question of difficult schools. There are certain sections of every large city, where home and general living conditions carry over into the classroom a number of difficulties. Many of the children, perhaps, speak a foreign language at home; or discipline at home is maintained by force and fear and the children are consequently resentful, aggressive, and hard to restrain. There is some agitation for—and some opposition to—the payment of a bonus for teaching in a "difficult" area.

How teachers feel about such assignments is indicated in the sensitive novel *Come Back on Monday,* written in 1960 by Sheila S. Klass, who taught for 7 years in New York City's Negro-Puerto-Rican section of Harlem. She writes:

"Can any teacher perform the Herculean labor that is good teaching in a slum school? What Liberal Arts graduate—What Normal School alumnus—What Teachers' College pedagogue in her right mind—would choose to teach in Harlem?"

The second is the question of equal pay for men and women. The men point out that, under our social system, the man is legally bound to support his wife and children. In other fields, men are paid more than women. As a matter of history, when equal pay was introduced in New York City, the entering salary of women was raised from $600 a year to $720, while that of men was reduced from $900 to a matching $720. Is it hard to see why men turned to other fields? And as a matter of today's fact, most male teachers who have a wife and children to support find it necessary (unless there is another source of income, as when the wife also works) to take extra work after school hours,

over week ends, or during the vacation that is hailed as one of the advantages of teaching. Some women teachers, it is true, have parents or ailing relatives to support; so have men; but the normal expectation of our society today is that a man support his family. With divorce, it is the woman who may sit back and receive alimony.

Women teachers, who far outnumber the men and by their numbers won the law establishing equal pay, naturally respond to these arguments by enunciating the principle of equal pay for equal work. Much more could be said on both sides of this question, but to argue the issues is irrelevant to the point of this book. What seems pertinent is the fact that, if men teachers are to be kept in our elementary and our high schools—and many educators feel that the children need a greater proportion of men than they now have—some steps must be taken to bring the offered salary more closely in line with what a good man can earn in other business and professional fields.

Before leaving the question of attracting more and better students into the teaching profession, let us recall the significant fact that, of male high-school graduates questioned as to their life career, the few that chose teaching stood among those with the lowest grades.

Professor Robert L. Thorndike and Elizabeth Hagen of Columbia University's Teachers College made a study, reported in the *New York Times,* of January 1, 1961, of 658 students who had taken the school's aptitude test in 1955. All had become teachers, but a total of 200 had left for other jobs, increasing their salaries by at least 25%. "The earlier tests showed that these 200 were mentally superior."

The *New York Times* of January 29, 1961, tells that the National Council of Teachers of English "estimates that fewer than half of all teachers now employed to teach English in the schools, from first grade through high school, are adequately prepared." In an editorial of the same day, the *Times* declares that there is

no adequate supply of competent mathematics teachers at the university level, and "the Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences reports that the quality of college mathematics teaching staffs is deteriorating rapidly." This immediately affects the quality of those being trained to teach in the elementary and high schools. Present conditions condemn many of our children to be taught by the mediocre and the half-fit.

Ralph Ross, Professor of the Humanities at the University of Montana, in the *New Leader* of December 26, 1960, looks forward wistfully, with a Christmas hope, "to a day when the elementary and secondary schools will not dull the edge of intelligence and dampen the fires of curiosity." Poor teachers are not only incapable of giving impetus to bright pupils, they may also be enviously unwilling to help them on.

Over 150 of Columbia's superior group of 200 stated that they would be happy to teach again, "if conditions improve." In addition to higher salaries, they want smaller classes, better equipment and materials, and fewer non-teaching assignments. These are some of the ways in which teaching conditions can be ameliorated, so as to attract more and better persons into the profession and to provide them with the basic means of effective and therefore pleasant endeavor.

Most immediate of these is the provision of adequate school buildings, of sufficient and properly designed and equipped classrooms, of appropriate books and materials. Fuller study and use are needed of the techniques available through the loudspeaker, the motion picture, radio, and television, and the even more revolutionary "programmed learning," which opposes to these mass devices a pattern of self-instruction and individual progress via teaching machines. But even more important is the reduction of the pupil load, of the size of classes, to such a number that the teacher can give each child the essential individual attention, the feeling that he is being cared for as a person, without losing the cohesiveness and mutual purposes of the group. Most teach-

ers feel that the ideal size of a class is about 15 or 20. At present, such a class is to be found only in private schools, in special groups of handicapped children, or in specialized advanced courses where laboratory or other equipment can accommodate only a small number. Public schools do not even envisage general classes of this size, and for present practical purposes most teachers would sigh in relief if their class were cut to 30.

Far from any present prospect of decreasing the size of classes, the nation faces a rapidly increasing shortage of classrooms. The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare reported a shortage of 142,100 classrooms in the Fall of 1960, as compared with 135,200 in 1959. There are in the country over 1,868,000 pupils in excess of normal classroom capacity, and in addition to those packed into overcrowded classes 685,000 pupils in 36 states are attending school on curtailed or half-day sessions.

Large classes seem to be as irremediable as the weather. Every educator agrees that something should be done about them; but no one has a practicable suggestion. As long as there is a teacher shortage, there will be overcrowding in the schools and too large classes; as long as there are overcrowded classes and consequent difficulties, more bright young folks will not be attracted to teaching and the shortage will continue. Meanwhile the population grows and grows. And until some way out of this dilemma is found, those who are teaching will continue to work under excessive pressure. When a devoted teacher does her best, yet recognizes that, because of too large classes, she is not reaching the children in effective ways, she naturally feels thwarted. She may strain to do still more, and under the increasing pressures grow still more anxious and disturbed; or she may come to feel that her endeavors are hopeless, and lapse into a routine execution of her assignments. Proper work can be done only under proper conditions.

One avenue of present relief for the overburdened teacher might be the reduction of her clerical work. The checking of

daily attendance is not an intrinsic part of the teaching process, but no other practical way has been devised for this than to have teachers note the attendance and write cards to the parents of absentees during some sort of "official" or "home room" period. This must be followed by further time-taking insistence on explanatory notes and checking of possible truants. These, however, are but the beginning of the many items of clerical activity that press upon and impede the teacher's essential function. In every school system, a study of this question should lead to the readjustment of statistical compilation so as to take much of the extra burden of clerical work off the hands and the mind of the teacher.

Thus far, this chapter has dealt with general problems of public attitude and concern, and problems of school organization and administration. We now turn to examine, from the point of view of mental health, more specific problems connected with the career of the teacher: her training, her acceptance into the service, her supervision while in the classroom, and the conditions of her ultimate retirement.

Training schools today leave much to be desired. Even from the general point of view, the education they offer is inferior. Henry T. Heald, former head of New York University and now President of the Ford Foundation, heading the Governor Rockefeller Committee on Higher Education, in its report of November 1960 proposed that the New York State Teachers Colleges be converted into "good" liberal arts colleges, on the assumption that "teachers should have a good general education; they should be as well educated as other college graduates."

Evidently, they are not. In their own field, they have need of further awakening. In training schools and schools of education, there should be required classes in mental hygiene, in motivation and the psychodynamics of behavior. Courses should frankly face and acquaint the prospective teacher with the potential difficulties in the field and the methods of coping with them, and should

ready the teacher to recognize symptoms of trouble within herself in time to seek appropriate remedy. Chief among the charges psychiatrists level at disturbed teachers are "lack of insight," "lack of awareness."

At this stage of the preparation of the future teacher, many institutions already undertake various psychological testings and measurements of the student's personality and potentiality. These should be followed with specific action to strengthen the characteristics valuable in a teacher. Persons of long experience and considerable success in the field, for example, have expressed the opinion that their earlier years as teachers would have been much more pleasant and more effective, in contacts with children, parents, and supervisors, if they had had, back in their days of preparation, "friendly training in how to get along."

From the training school, perhaps a "profile" of the prospective teacher, as manifested in classroom and extracurricular contacts, in student teaching, and in psychological tests, should be forwarded to the examining body. Surely, once the applicant is accepted and has begun to teach, such a record of her attainments and attitudes, of her knowledge and her personality, should be prepared and kept, not "on file" but freshly current with her continuing service.

A detailed chart for a "profile" of this sort is presented here. It will be noted that not all of the items are applicable at the beginning of a teacher's career, but they may become pertinent as the teacher grows and perhaps advances in the system. This pattern is, of course, merely suggestive; each school system may find variations suited to its particular concerns. After each item, there should be space for a brief comment.

PROFILE

I. Attitude Toward Children
   1. bias
   2. understanding of children

3. participation in child interests
4. promotion of child welfare
5. liking for children

II. Personality
1. physical appearance
2. appropriateness of dress
3. neatness
4. manners
5. disposition
6. sense of humor
7. tact
8. courtesy
9. dignity
10. poise
11. forcefulness
12. attitude toward the pupil's parents
13. attitude toward supervisors and fellow teachers
14. attitude toward public authority
15. a follower or a leader?

III. Speech and Voice
1. pronunciation—tonal quality
2. intonation
3. diction
4. speech defects or disorders

IV. Physical Health
1. frequency of absence
2. chronic illness
3. handicaps
4. vigor (physical vitality)
5. physical alertness

V. Mental Capacities and Abilities
1. organization of ideas
2. originality
3. versatility
4. creativeness
5. mental alertness
6. capacity of retention

7. adaptability
8. clarity in expression
9. analytical power
10. grasp of complex and distressing situations
11. initiative
12. balance
13. vision
14. resourcefulness
15. ingenuity
16. imagination
17. potentiality for professional growth
18. insight and judgment
19. independence of judgment
20. decisiveness

VI. Scholarship and Culture
1. cultural background
2. interest in professional literature
3. research activities
4. leisure time interests
5. diversity of interests
6. cultural pursuits

VII. Community Leadership
1. social vision
2. ability in the field of public relations
3. evidence of cynicism
4. democratic attitudes
5. sympathetic attitudes
6. development of constructive programs
7. participation in civic affairs
8. integration of educational and community life

VIII. Administrative Ability
1. executive ability
2. ability to use authority constructively
3. courage in professional administration
4. professional character of service
5. ability to cooperate
6. industry

7. willingness to accept responsibility
8. ability to develop teacher growth
9. ability to secure and hold confidence of professional staff
10. drive
11. ability to complete a task undertaken
12. willingness to experiment
13. freedom from mechanical routine
14. altruism as administrative impetus
15. ability to speak in public
16. willingness to acknowledge source of help

IX. General Integrity
1. professional integrity
2. personal integrity

X. Areas of Professional Knowledge
1. concept of what learning and teaching are
2. knowledge of curriculum practices
3. knowledge of school plant
4. ability to envisage a total district or community program (See also VII)
5. ability to interpret school finances to the community
6. knowledge of educational practices of the world's communities

Before beginning to teach, candidates must generally pass an examination. In large cities, this usually includes an oral test before an individual or a Board of Examiners. Such examiners are almost exclusively experts in subject matter also trained in pedagogy; they are drawn from the ranks of experienced teachers who have advanced to be supervisors and administrators of schools. They almost invariably are not experts in the fields of personality. A 1951 study of "Administrative Management of the School System of New York City," known as the Yavner-Strayer Report, recommended that "as the incumbent Examiners retire, they should be replaced by specialists in psychiatry, personnel psychology, and psychometrics, as well as scholars in the fields of English and the social studies, until some balance in the

character of the Board has been achieved." To date, this balance is lacking not only in New York but in school systems throughout the country.

Outside the large cities, a graduate of a training school may without further examination be granted a state-wide qualifying certificate as a teacher. Usually there will be a personal interview with an examiner, a supervisor or a principal, before a specific assignment is made. In such cases, it might be well to have a personnel expert who is a trained psychologist join with the examining officer. Where conditions do not call for the full-time use of such a man, adjacent districts or school divisions might share his services. The presence of a person trained in the appraisal of personality traits and possible personality problems should help to reduce the number of later cases of maladjusted and disturbed teachers.

Supervisors and administrators themselves should of course be given training in the methods of winning and maintaining friendly co-operation, in the early recognition of the signs of trouble in members of their staff, and in the understanding of motivation and the backgrounds of action. A great number of the complaints of disturbed teachers, as has been noted, placed much of the responsibility for their troubled state upon harassment, lack of understanding, and unsympathetic mishandling on the part of their superiors in office.

Among the many faults teachers find in their supervisors, some are of course individual; some are trivial; but others are truly important, and too frequently asserted to be brushed aside. Chief among these is lack of appreciation of the work of the teacher; others are failure to understand the nature of her striving, failure to lend encouragement, to acknowledge good endeavor, to praise success. Closely allied to these lacks is the conception of criticism as faultfinding. Some supervisors seem to think that the purpose of the periodical required visits of observation is to hunt for defects in the teacher's personality and performance; the

report of the visit, instead of being helpfully constructive, is carping and destructive of morale. Rather than finger-wagging or telling the teacher what to do, the supervisor should study the stresses in the situation with the teacher, and they should work together to remove them.

Beyond this major way in which a supervisor may fail in his purpose, which is to promote pleasant co-operation and increasingly effective work, several other faults obtrude. There may be many sorts of unfairness, of favoritism, of partiality, of bias, and discrimination. There may be a harshness that in some cases reaches a peak of refined cruelty. There may be stupidity. There may be extra pressures put upon the teacher because the supervisor is self-centered, is shifting responsibility, or is overambitious.

Prospective supervisors, teachers desirous of advancement, usually take courses in school organization and administration. There should be greater emphasis on courses in understanding the teachers they will have to supervise, in methods of co-operative working toward common goals, of giving the teacher a sense of freedom—freedom to do her best.

There is need for fuller encouragement of a warm friendly relationship between administrators and the teaching staff, for a greater sense of personal friendliness and support. At school conferences, for example, there should be a truly democratic discussion and fuller teacher participation, not merely a dealing out of reports and instructions. Individual schools approach these patterns with varying degrees of success; their wide fulfillment will do much to remove causes of conflict and to improve teacher morale.

While such pleasant relationships between teachers and administrators will do much to minimize mental disturbances, the supervisor must also be equipped to recognize the signs of mental illness when they come. The supervisor is not a psychiatrist, but his position entails the handling of conditions that may become dangerous; and he should have sufficient training to enable him to spot the danger signals and call these to appropriate attention.

In order not to alarm the teacher by calling for a medical or mental examination, and not to upset the school with the whispered gossip that So-and-So is being investigated, it might be effective to have a psychologist or psychiatrist available to accompany the supervisor on his next classroom observation of the troubled or troubling teacher, to help decide whether an examination is necessary.

Such a visit, however, runs the risk of seeming to single out that one teacher for special attention. The neurotic, aware that something is wrong with herself, might feel that she is being shamed. The psychotic, unaware of anything wrong, will feel persecuted. Other teachers and the pupils will begin to spread twisted word. These evils would not develop if a trained psychologist accompanies the supervisor on visits to the entire faculty. School systems are increasingly employing psychologists for the children; the work might improve if these specialists occasionally visited and, if necessary, consulted with the teachers as well. They are equipped to recognize the danger signals.

There are, according to Edward Linzer, Educational Director of the National Association for Mental Health, ten danger signals:

1. Sweeping change in personality and behavior
2. Confusion and loss of memory
3. Fears of being plotted against, or grandiose ideas
4. Hearing voices; talking to oneself
5. Thinking people are watching or talking about one
6. Seeing visions; smelling imaginary odors
7. Complaining of impossible body changes
8. Performing repetitive acts (as washing hands); refusing to touch objects (as books, door knobs) others have handled
9. Showing markedly depressed behavior; continuously brooding
10. Behaving dangerously (as carrying a knife against imaginary enemies)

None of these, however, in itself suffices to do more than raise a question, and Dr. Linzer himself states that they are danger signals "if exhibited with great intensity and over a long time." Amateur diagnosis is as incompetent as amateur psychoanalysis, and if spread as gossip and whispered through a school, where children are quick to sense currents of feeling and opinion, such comment may do considerable harm, and even aggravate beyond tolerance what begins as a mild disaffection. Even the supervisor who has taken courses and in that measure is trained in the field, should do no more than decide that a psychiatrist should be called upon to examine a teacher.

Proper training may also lead a principal or other supervisor to examine himself. Promotion to higher posts in a school system is based not only on tests but upon one's record in the classroom. The assumption is, therefore, that those chosen are among the best qualified to be in charge of a body of teachers, to give them encouraging and stimulating guidance and leadership. At the same time, once the period of probation is past, the supervisor is secure in his post. He can be removed only on specific charges of incompetence or malfeasance, and who among his faculty will be hardy enough to initiate such an action? As a consequence, a supervisor may lapse into comfortable but routine performance of his duties, and fall far short of the inspiriting leader he ought to be. Or he may, as a principal, engage in a fierce drive toward the superintendency, becoming an unrelenting taskmaster, exacting from his teachers all kinds of extra service to bring his school to constant and favorable attention. Worse still, he may, in the ease of command and the new self-confidence of his post, give expression—perhaps unwittingly—to bias, prejudice, sadism, or other disruptive tendencies earlier suppressed or controlled. Appropriate preliminary training should acquaint the prospective supervisor with such possibilities, and thus make him less likely to manifest them in his own work.

Eight of the "blocks to better schools" listed at a meeting of

seventeen national organizations with the Elementary Education Division of the U.S. Office of Education are made of matters that involve supervisors:

Mediocre administrative and supervisory leadership,
Inappropriately prepared and overworked principals,
Undemocratic determination of education policies,
Arbitrary decisions, arbitrarily enforced,
Excessive number of extra-instructional duties,
Conflicting objectives and theories of learning,
Uniform curriculum and standards imposed on all,
Departmentalized instruction and rigid standards of achievement.

Even with the most understanding encouragement and friendly support, mental and emotional disturbances, and moral lapses, will afflict some teachers. It has been suggested that these may be minimized by periodic measurement of teacher and faculty morale, so that steps can be taken to remove the causes of lowered morale. There may be some point to such procedure, if a study of the problem reveals some way of measuring teacher morale without having the process itself tend to lower the morale.

When, however, the signs of mental disturbance continue, the principal is faced with a disagreeable task. He is naturally reluctant to request a medical examination of a teacher, for this at once further disturbs the teacher and disrupts the school. When he does make the recommendation, pressure to counteract it is immediately brought to bear, by colleagues friendly to the teacher, by teacher organizations, by the teacher's family. The principal must be fortified with the knowledge that the interests of both children and teacher are best served by a prompt investigation of the teacher's physical and mental health. The children must of course be protected, as soon as there seems likelihood of danger or of failure to handle and instruct the class properly. The teacher can perhaps be aided, if promptly diagnosed and treated, to

recover from an affliction that, if allowed to develop unchecked, may become irreversible and irremediable. This characteristic of mental (as of much other) illness, that it responds most happily to treatment in the early stages but with much lengthier treatment and much less likelihood of recovery after it has developed, cannot be too frequently stressed. It should be a major aspect of any campaign to enlighten the public about mental illness, so as to encourage prompt treatment instead of protective and concealing devices. Too often uninformed and mistaken friends, in well-meaning disservice, manage to postpone proper attention until it is too late to save the mind of the person for whom they have been trying to save the job.

After the recommendation of the supervisor, there may come a physical, followed by a mental, examination. Here let a layman, who has studied many hundreds of psychiatric reports, point out to the psychiatrists the impression such a study has given him. There seems often to be a predisposition on the part of the examining psychiatrist to assume that because a teacher is sent to him there must be something wrong, and hence that she is trying to conceal unpleasant or "incriminating" facts—to assume, in other words, that the teacher being examined is interested not in the truth but in a clean bill of health. There seems, at times, indeed, an unconscious bias in the expert on the unconscious.

Perhaps the clearest outcropping of such an attitude appears in the egregious use of the verb "deny." Almost invariably the patient "denied serious illness"; "denied mental illness in family." "She denies being accident-prone." "Denied hallucinatory experiences." "Family history of nervous and mental disease denied." Again and again occurs this word, which implies disbelief in the patient's statement. The dictionary says: "To deny: to declare (a statement) untrue; to contradict." And she *must* be mentally ill who contradicts her physician! Psychiatrists sometimes speak of a patient as "denying" when she is "unconsciously

repressing a disturbing factor." This only makes the use of the word in reporting a history more unfortunate! So rare as to be like a beacon of objectivity in a fog of bias, is such neutral phrasing as: "Patient states he has never suffered from mental illness" or "No history of neuropsychiatric conditions in the family."

Before the teacher reports for examination, her filed record and all details of the current case are presented to the psychiatrist. And there seem to be occasions when the psychiatrist, again unconsciously, interprets the "facts" so as to support the notions rising from the supervisor's criticisms. He fashions his judgment after what he calls the "history" of the case. He finds in the teacher what the principal has charged. Read, for example, the comments on Stella Hunt. For almost an hour, to the psychiatrist, Miss Hunt could "talk easily; at times, she smiled appropriately. Her stream of mental activity impressed me as relevant and coherent at all times. After the better part of an hour had passed, I began to insert some mild queries regarding her experiences in her teaching position. Thereupon, her manner of discourse subtly altered. There was a slight but perceptible change in the tone of her voice; the manner in which she emphasized her points became sharper and suggestive of a basic defiance. There became apparent a difficult-to-describe, blandly superior, attitude concerning her evaluation of the corrective comments and instructions of her supervisors. Clinically interpreted in the light of the historical material you provided, the latter observation suggested that this teacher's personality embraced a paranoid potential which, for the duration of my interview with her, she succeeded in covering up rather well . . .

"*Diagnostic Impression:* From a careful perusal of the historical material made available to me, and from a psychiatric evaluation of the type and order of the subtle nuances contained in her general attitude, behavior, and emotional reactions, stream of mental activity and trend of thought, it is apparent that this

woman suffers from one of the less flagrantly bizarre forms of mental disorder. This disorder has been, and continues to be, subject to fluctuations in degree and duration of symptoms—the very nature of which frequently escapes general notice. Very often, the signs and symptoms are evoked only by certain specific situations rather than being a general response to any and all environmental situations. As is characteristic of so much of the paranoid reaction patterns, the individual so afflicted is able to cover them up quite successfully except under sustained stress. Also, the sick person, by virtue of the nature of the illness process itself, generally lacks any sustained capacity to recognize disordered thinking and feeling within herself; as a result, there exists what we call 'lack of insight'—which, of course, effectively hampers efforts of others to be helpful to the afflicted individual . . . *Prognosis:* Sustained improvement or complete remission is not to be expected, from a statistical viewpoint."

From a careful reading of this material, one may judge that the psychiatrist lacked insight into the fact that he was biased. He seems as eager to find Miss Stella Hunt mentally ill as his less representative colleague (for more questionable motives, see Chapter 19) was to declare Mrs. Helen Thornton mentally sound. Much of the description of Miss Hunt—"difficult-to-describe, blandly superior, attitude," etc.—sounds like special pleading. Her "slight but perceptible change," the "subtle nuances" when the psychiatrist began to talk of the classroom, might well have been, not the trouble he thought he should discover, but the natural increase of tension—plain nervousness—as he approached the immediate cause of her visit. Much of the *Diagnostic Impression*—"Very often . . . as is characteristic of so much," etc.—sounds not like an objective analysis of the immediate individual but like a general textbook description. Having developed a "paranoid potential" into a fact, condemning her on her "history" rather than on his own observations, the psychiatrist then draws upon "statistical" likelihood to doom her.

To protect the teacher from erroneous interpretations, either in the reports of the supervisors or in the consequent opinions and diagnoses of the psychiatrist, it might be well to have the teacher come to the psychiatrist "cold," that is, to supply the psychiatrist with no material, allowing him to elicit and deduce all his facts and findings from the teacher. Let him examine and report. That is his function. Judgment as to the teacher's efficiency, in the light of that report and the teacher's history in school and out, is a function of her supervisors and the superintendents, and finally of the Retirement Board. Matters of law, similarly, are for the judge; matters of fact and final determination are for the jury of one's peers. This is a thought put forth by a concerned layman, for the consideration of those in whose domain the matter more formally stands. Yet some psychiatrists say that their usual procedure is to examine the patient first, then read the history (provided by the referring physician or the court), then examine the patient again. This, while taking more time, affords more objectivity and freedom from preconception.

Finally, when the occasion does arise that calls for the retirement of a mentally ill teacher, practical steps for expeditious and humane treatment should be provided. Even after long years of service, few teachers can, at the current low level of payment for their work, have saved any tidy sums for a rainy day. They may face years of expensive treatment and often have no recourse but to become a public charge. The retirement allowance for teachers calls for re-examination. School officials and teacher organizations should take steps to develop a humane program for retirement of the mentally ill teacher.

The U.S. Postal Service has made a good start in the right direction. From that service, one may retire with full pension rights after 35 years. One may, however, retire earlier, down to a limit of 25 years of service; for each year less than 35, 1% of the pension is deducted. If during those 10 years, however, a postal employee is granted disability retirement (physical or mental),

there is no such deduction; he receives the full sum to which he is entitled after 35 years.

These are what seem to be the major considerations, in the problem of what to do about the mentally disturbed and the mentally ill teacher. A national committee, perhaps organized under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, could doubtless, after a survey of the scene and a weighing of the situation, more effectively make recommendations leading to the carrying through of a detailed practical program.

Indeed, such a survey, without special regard to the teacher, has just been made. After the Mental Health Study Act (Public Law No. 182) of Congress in 1955, the 45 members of the Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health pursued their study of the problem. Their Final Report (published by Basic Books as *Action For Mental Health,* on April 3, 1961) has many cogent suggestions. It expresses especial concern over the way in which one difference between physical and mental illness—the manifestations of mental affliction—tends to promote a rejection of the victim of mental disease, not only by those in casual contact with such a person, but by the patient's own family and even in some measure by the very professional workers who are supposedly trying to effect a cure. The situation indeed calls for fuller examination and action!

"As is true of deficiencies in mental patient service," the Final Report adds of the financial problem, "the inadequacies in the support of scientific research in this field have no quick and easy remedies." The Report—loosely including $12 million spent by the pharmaceutical industry for drug research—states that some $70 million, the cost of two Atlas missiles, is being spent for all related research in the field, whereas it "estimates conservatively that mental illness is costing the nation at least $3 billion annually." Omitting Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Pennsyl-

vania, which do better, "the remaining States collectively allocate less than 0.5 per cent of their total mental hospital budgets for research." Including these "best" four states, the percentage is still a pitiful 1.7 for research. Over twenty states make no research appropriation whatsoever. And the best the Joint Commission can recommend, for any likely allotment in the face of current unconcern, is that "expenditures for public mental patient services should be doubled in the next 5 years, and tripled in the next 10." To secure even this will require a vast educational campaign.

The achievement of the objectives of informed and humane treatment of the mentally ill teacher and of the improvement of teaching conditions and of teaching, is the responsibility of the entire community. The problems of the mentally disturbed teacher and of securing wholesome teachers for our schools are of the greatest importance, not only for our national well-being, but for our position in the world. In the fierce international tensions of today, we dare no longer neglect these problems. We fail to solve them at our peril.

"A sound mind in a sound body" is essential not only in the growing generation but in its teachers, the leaders of our youth, the guides of those that will determine our future.

Index

Ackerman, Dr. Nathan, 345
Aguilar, Helen Saunders, 339 f
alcoholism, 28 f, 42 f, 268 f, 331, 349
Altman, Dr. Emil, 4 f
Alton, Kent, 194 f
anxiety, 128 f, 188 f
Armand, Dr. Grayson, 252 f
arteriosclerosis, 48, 111, 233, 236, 256, 260, 338
Atwood, Louise T., 250, 288 f
Auer, Madeleine, 249 f
auto-eroticism. *See* masturbation
Averill, John, 167 f
awareness, 307 f
Ayres, Joseph, 325 f

Barone, Gilda, 241 f
Barr, Samuel, 128 f
Beach, Katherine, 78 f
Bell, Paula, 238 f
bemusement, 219 f
Bennett, Katherine M., 275 f
Benson, Theodore, 163 f
Benton, Emily, 138 f
bias. *See* prejudice
Bone, Miss, 351
Bradford, Ellen, 148 f
Brandau, Eloise, 240 f
Braut, Hulda, 304 f
Brewer, Ern, 349
Broadhead, Doris, 291 f
Brockton, Edna T., 31
Browning, Thomas, 32 f
Buhler, Julia, 101 f

Casper, Miss, 353 f
catatonia, 48
Chagla, Ambassador M. C., 373 f
characteristics. *See* supervisors; teachers
Cheney, Helen, 55 f
children. *See* pupils
classes, size of, 8 f, 19 f, 380 f
clerk, 31 f, 181 f, 205 f, 275 f, 354 f, 365 f, 381 f
Cobb, Ethel, 239 f
Coleman, Ed, 99 f
collecting, 214
Comers, Mary, 30
Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences, 380
Conklin, Terry, 165 f
control. *See* discipline
Copperud, Roy H., 22
corporal punishment, 67 f, 87, 127, 137, 138, 139, 140 f, 170, 212 f, 224 f, 229, 231 f, 242, 246, 248 f
Coven, Erna, 173 f

Creedmoor State Mental Hospital (New York), 115
criminality, 1 f
  cause, 96
  cost, 1 f
cyclothymia, 48, 257

Dearchild, Dorothy, 315 f
Delman, Peter, 237 f
delusions, 143 f, 188
delusions of grandeur, 49, 156 f
dementia praecox, 48
depression, 48 f, 178 f
  Also see mania; melancholia
Deutsch, Karl, 313 f
Dexter, Mrs., 97
diagnosis, 115, 192
discipline, 55 f
dishonesty, 274 f
disorderliness, mental, 219 f
  physical, 204 f
Dodd, June, 146 f
Donn, Irving, 85 f
Dory, Jane, 93 f
Doty, Miss, 350 f
Drummond, Adelaide, 310 f
Dunn, Superintendent, 237

Ebaugh, Dr. Franklin C., 47 f
Edman, Miss, 205
Education, Board of, 33, 51, 259 f, 362
  U.S. Office of, 390 f, 396
Ehrmann, Dr. Winston, 329
Elman, Cora, 27 f
epilepsy, 263 f
Ettling, Alice, 75 f
euphoria, 49, 129, 156, 167 f
Ewalt, Dr. Jack R., 47 f
Examiners, Board of, 24 f, 51, 386 f
exhibitionism, 161 f, 164, 313
extrovert, 108

facies, 48
Farmer, Alice, 106 f
fear, 188
Fenton, N., 7
folie à deux, 176 f, 323
Foster, Mr., 103 f
Freud, Sigmund, 50 f, 89, 330
frustration, 75, 211, 228, 315 f, 318, 335 f, 362

Galin, Dr. Simon, 330
Garkel, Louis, 265 f
Gibbons, Adelaide, 228 f
Gibby, Robert G., 377
Gilbert Youth Research, 329
Giles, Selma, 197 f
Gilson, Alice, 151 f
Glasser, Dr. William, 203
Godwin, Alice, 42 f
Greene, Gertrude, 347 f

Hagen, Elizabeth, 379
Hallenbeck, Elizabeth, 264 f
hallucinations, 143 f, 206
Hamelin, Gladys, 324
Hampton, Mr., 350
Hario, Elaine, 34 f
hatred of the work, 334 f
Hazlewood, Thomas N., 348 f
Heald, Dr. Henry T., 382
hebephrenia, 48, 96, 317
Held, Francis, 320 f
Hightower, Dr. Nicholas C., 6 f
hoarding, 214 f
Hobalt, Mrs., 351

Hoff, Ruth, 70 f
Holt, Genevieve, 205 f
homosexuality, 34, 301, 304 f, 310 f, 313, 356
honesty, 274, 279
Hoover, J. Edgar, 2
Horton, Gladys, 31
hostility, 106 f
Hughes, Norma, 97
Hunt, Monica, 57 f
Hunt, Dr. Robert C., 371
Hunt, Stella, 393
Hutt, Max L., 377
hypochondriasis, 173 f
hypomania, 48 f, 172, 177, 184, 257

ideas of reference, 143
Illinois Association of Teachers of English, 87 f
illusions, 143 f
Indianapolis Public School System, 221 f
insight, 307 f
interest, lack of, 318, 334 f
introvert, 108
involution, 49, 61, 180, 195, 196, 233
irony, 97 f
irritability, 48, 84 f, 335

Jayne, Alma, 215 f
Johnson, Dr. K. Richard, 2
Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health, Final Report of, 396 f
Jung, Freda, 134 f
juvenile delinquency, 12, 96

Kaiser, Dorothy, 100 f
Keene, Genevieve, 126 f
Keliher, A. V., 10
Kellogg, Dr., 355
Kennedy, President John F., 1, 6
"Kinsey Reports," 329, 331
Klass, Sheila S., 378
kleptomania, 295 f
Koch, Prof. Leo, 302
Kopp, Norman, 34 f
Krivett, Sally, 318 f

La Guardia, Mayor (Fiorello), 5
Langdon, Mildred, 269
Laqueur, Dr. H. Peter, 50, 345
Lardon, Kathryn, 120 f
Laycock, S. R., 1
Leary, Gloria, 231 f
Lee, Marsha, 233 f
Lester, Frank, 323 f
Lind, Mary, 40 f
Lindgren, H. C., 10 f
Linzer, Dr. Edward, 389 f
Loomis, Elvira, 60 f
Lukes, Lillian, 130 f

McGrath, Dr. Earl James, 2
Mahon, Rosalie, 72 f
mania, 48 f, 183
Also see depression
manic-depressive, 48 f, 178 f, 252 f
Marks, Dr. Louis, 3 f
Marr, Ruth, 122 f
Martin, "Lucky Lou," 356 f
Masters, Mark, 183 f
masturbation, 234, 329, 330
May, Prof. Leo C., 302
Mayo Clinic, 6 f
Meeker, Arthur, 30 f
melancholia, 49, 61, 183
Also see depression
Menninger, Dr. Karl, 44

menopause, 189 f, 230 f, 265, 293, 312
Mental Health Committee, N. Y. State, 13 f
mental illness, causes, 6, 368
  danger signals, 44 f, 389 f
  definition, 47, 151
  handling, 26 f, 57, 115, 167, 180 f, 371 f, 388 f, 391 f, 395 f
  public attitude, 3, 5 f, 370 f, 396
  recovery from, 115, 143
  research, 3, 372, 396 f
  statistics, 6 f, 115, 372
Molloy, Mrs., 349 f
Mones, Leon, 2
monitor, 72 f, 80 f, 213
Moreland, Harriet, 189 f
Myerson, Dr. Abraham, 3

nagging, 90 f
National Association for the Advancement of Science, 371
National Association for Better Radio and Television, 11
National Association for Mental Health, 389
National Citizens' Council for Better Schools, 9
National Council of Teachers of English, 379
National Education Association, 8, 377
National Health Association, 372
Nau, Hedda, 224 f
Necker, James, 28 f
nervousness, 219 f, 275
neurosis, 46, 49 f, 69, 83, 118, 131, 149, 172, 195, 202, 297, 327, 389
New Leader, 380
New York State Mental Health Committee, 13 f, 20
New York Times, 4, 5, 19, 345, 379 f
normality, 47 f, 50 f, 57, 105, 115, 183, 219, 300, 333, 345

obscenity, 300 f, 310 f
obsession, 195
Ormsby, Mr., 237
Orth, Robert, 114 f

panic, 188
paranoia, 49, 66, 73, 76, 85, 91, 96, 122, 123, 128, 129, 131, 133, 135, 138, 141, 145, 147, 154, 159, 162, 166, 177, 207, 317, 320
parents, attitude of, 246 f
Parents-Teachers Association. *See* PTA
Peck, Clifford, 144 f
Pedant, Dr. Gerald, 22
persecution, sense of, 41, 49, 117, 125 f, 145 f, 147
phobia, 188
poise, 219 f
Polen, Gertrude, 112 f
pornography, 152 f, 300 f, 313 f
Postal Service, U.S., 395 f
prejudice, 12, 113 f, 135 f, 240 f, 246 f, 355
prestige. *See* teachers
principal, 26, 31 f, 96 f, 103 f, 112, 118 f, 167, 171, 205, 228 f, 252 f, 260 f, 325 f, 338 f, 349 f, 360, 362 f, 390
prostitution, 302, 331 f

psychiatrist, 26, 28, 45 f, 61, 115
  as aid to supervisor, 37, 386 f, 389
  on examining boards, 24 f, 386 f
  possible bias, 392 f
psychoneurosis. *See* neurosis
psychopathic states, classification of, 284 f
psychosis, 47, 49 f, 59, 63, 66, 71 f, 76, 177, 184, 233, 256 f, 312, 338, 389
PTA, 73, 81, 129 f, 246, 248, 254, 366 f
pupils, problem, 11 f, 19, 45, 93, 244 f
  conflicting standards, 17 f
  excessive competition, 15 f
  hostile child, the, 15
  lack of attention, 19
  lack of love, 18 f
  overemphasis on tests and grades, 16
  quicker child, the, 13 f
  slow learner, the, 13
  suppressed child, the, 14
Putnam, Mr., 355 f

radar, 102 f, 150, 151 f, 153 f, 197 f
Ramo, Simon, 377
Randall, Lavinia, 37 f
rating. *See* teachers: rating
Reiner, Hildegard, 296 f
Reinhardt, Rose, 157 f
Reston, Lucy, 189
retirement, 57, 262
  financial concerns, 395 f
  machinery of, 52 f, 391 f
  mandatory age, 52, 221
Retirement Board, 52 f
Retirement Committee, 52
Richfield, Dora, 31
Ritter, Dinah, 179 f
Ross, Ralph, 380

sadism, 66, 75, 79 f, 82, 99, 224, 352, 359, 388
Sandman, Beatrice, 68 f
Saunders, Helen. *See* Aguilar
Sawyer, Ronald, 269 f
Scheffel, Sarah, 149 f
Schiller, Edith, 115 f
schizophrenia, 48, 50, 57, 69, 76, 85, 96, 107 f, 114, 123, 131, 133, 143, 150, 154, 164, 207, 230, 235, 291, 312, 317, 320
School Board. *See* Education, Board of
  schools, difficult, 378
  shortage of, 1, 8, 381
Schoop, Martha, 346 f
Schuster, Dr. George N., 313 f
Schwab, Ethel, 185 f
seduction, 83, 323, 324
senile deterioration, 48, 59, 60, 214, 224, 231 f, 236 f
sex mores, 11, 33 f, 75, 88, 112 f, 123, 163, 233 f, 281 f, 300 f
sexual deviation, 300 f
Sheen, Bishop Fulton J., 67
Sherman, George, 336 f
shortage. *See* schools; teachers
Simm, Anna, 118 f
slovenliness. *See* disorderliness
Smith, Dr. Harry L., 6 f
Smith, Jennie, 132 f
Sorel, Frances, 270
Sorkin, Mr., 351 f
Spectator, 373

Spence, Lola, 304 f
Stone, Mr., 349
Strang, George, 160 f
Strecker, Dr. Edward A., 47 f
strictness, 99 f
Strohl, Mr., 237
Summerhill School, 330, 375
Superintendents, Board of, 51 f, 362
  mentally disturbed, 7, 356 f
supervisors, 27 f, 31 f, 37, 86, 161, 171, 237, 337, 360, 387 f, 390
  "blocks to better schools," 390 f
  characteristics of, 387 f
  training of, 24 f, 388
suspicion, 125 f, 142, 143
syndrome, 48 f

Talbot, Miss, 237
teachers, as students see them, 87 f, 208 f, 222 f, 299
  characteristics, 1, 20 f, 109
  conditions of work, 8 f, 10 f, 244 f, 361 f, 380 f
  examinations, 386 f
  influence, 2, 13, 69, 89, 93, 95 f, 98, 105, 158, 161 f, 173, 176 f, 207 f, 210, 213, 223, 228, 272 f, 274 f, 284, 298 f, 312 f, 336, 344
  mentally disturbed, handling of, 5, 24 f, 57, 109 f, 114, 134, 180 f, 182 f, 327 f
  numbers planning to become, 8, 23
  preparation, 19 f, 24, 382 f
  prestige, 22, 373 f
  profile chart, 383 f
teachers—(*Continued*)
  rating, 26, 61, 202
  salaries, 21 f, 368, 374 f, 378
  shortage, 1, 8 f, 19 f, 23 f, 375 f
teaching, reasons for, 334 f, 380
technical terms (Glossary), 46 f
Tesley, Sylvia, 270 f
Thompson, Henry, 80 f
Thornblow, Mrs., 350
Thorndike, Ella, 90 f
Thorndike, Prof. Robert L., 379
Thornton, Helen, 278 f
Tilden, Joseph, 263 f
Times. See *New York Times*
transfer, 29 f, 138
Tubb, Mr., 349

U.S. Office of Education. *See* Education, U.S. Office of

violence, 11 f
Voelkel, Elizabeth, 82 f

Wells, Ruth, 211 f
Wheelock, Sadie, 193 f
White, William, 108 f
Whiteside, Henrietta and Nancy, 181 f
Whitsun, Dr., 157
Wicks, Mabel, 154 f
withdrawal, 106 f
Withers, Maude, 247 f
Wood, Hortense, 136 f
worry, 188 f, 191

Yager, Lena, 61 f
Yavner-Strayer Report, 386 f

Ziegler, Emma, 260 f